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THE BANEWARRENS

THE BANEWARRENS

A mega-adventure taking characters from 6th to 10th level

By Monte Cook

Requires use of the *Dungeons & Dragons® Player's Handbook*, Third Edition,
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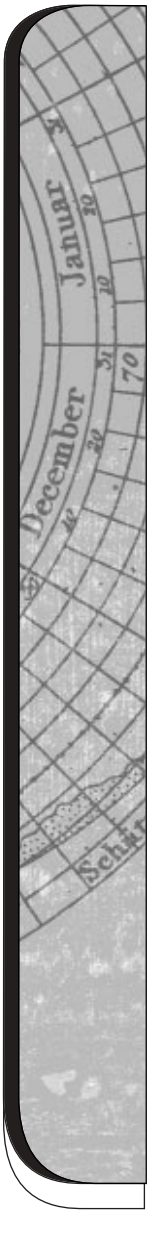
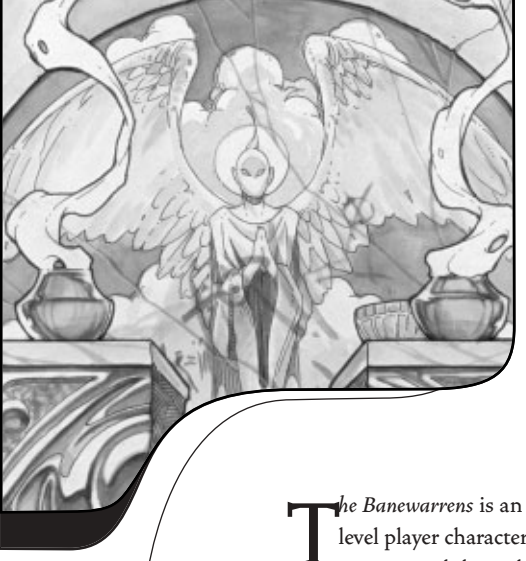




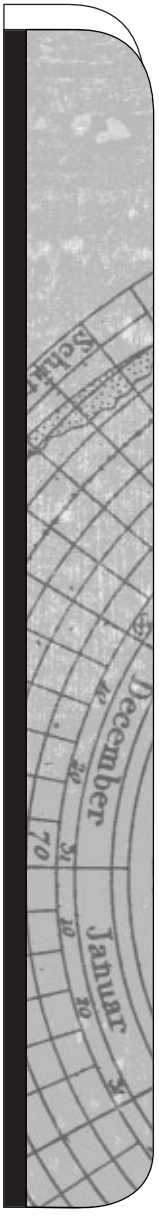
Prelude to Adventure

The basic premise of this adventure is simple: What happens if an ancient storehouse of evil artifacts and dangers opens up near a very populated area? Who gets involved? Who wants in, and who wants it sealed back up again? The answers, on the surface, might seem surprising.

The Banewarrens is an adventure designed with four 6th-level player characters (PCs) in mind. If these characters proceed through the course of the adventure, they should reach at least 10th level. A rogue is essential to the party because the Banewarrens contains a lot of traps and locks, and the group must do a lot of information gathering. But, of course, fighters, arcanists, clerics, and other classes all have a role to play.

The course of the adventure takes the PCs into the deepest bowels of evil: an ancient underground vault system used to store the vilest artifacts and imprison the most evil of creatures. But *The Banewarrens* is no simple dungeon crawl. The PCs aren't the only ones interested in this ancient storehouse of malevolence. No fewer than four large organizations are also involved—some friendly to the adventurers, and some not.

This adventure is both location- and event-based. While the PCs explore the warrens, other forces are on the move, changing the way things work. The DM must not only manage the locations important to the Banewarrens, but the events that occur as part of the dynamic plot. The adventure is divided into chapters, most of which contain both locations and events. This format helps provide structure. The events described in a chapter do not occur until the PCs are in the locations that chapter specifies. Exactly when to stage the events is up to the DM.



Background

In the ancient recesses of time, a powerful and benevolent cleric set upon a well-intentioned plan. In those days, evil was on the decline and the forces of darkness had been routed in almost every field of battle. The master of evil dragons had been chained, and even the fell races of orcs and goblins—once more numerous than the races of humans, dwarves, elves, halflings, or gnomes—had squirmed back into their meager, shadowy refuges.

With malevolence on the wane, the cleric Danar Rotansin sought once and for all to rid the world of the remaining evil influences. This powerful figure began to gather up all the evil artifacts, objects of dark power, trapped essences of vanquished fiends, demonic relics, and even the last vestiges of particularly horrible diseases. Danar called all of these things "banes" and imprisoned them. He believed that, if destroyed, the banes would simply release their evil into the world to wreak more havoc and bring about other darknesses. Destroying banes begat new banes.

Danar used powerful spells and magical items to accomplish his task, working tirelessly. As his collection of banes grew he began to bury them beneath his tower, Mosul Pearl, located near the sea. Danar constructed a vast catacomb, well warded and sealed, deep underground, and he called it the Banewarrens. He also found allies who believed in his cause to aid him. Chief among them were the dragon known as Saggarintys the Silver King and a celestial named Bastion, Guardian of the Morning.

But Danar's goal was folly. Concentrating so much raw hatred and despite—so much darkness and evil power—in one place was a terrible mistake. His actions drew the attention of vile intelligences of whose existence Danar had never even dreamed. These secretive forces manipulated events (and perhaps even time and space) to ensure that the *Book of Inverted Darkness* fell into the hands of this well-meaning cleric.

The *Book of Inverted Darkness* is an artifact older than the world itself. Scribed by gods and demons, its pages contain vast lore (only the *Book of Eldritch Might* contains greater lore, it is said), all of it dreadful. Unfortunately for Danar Rotansin—and the world—the book presented this dreadful knowledge using supernatural techniques, giving it an irresistibly seductive quality.

While he intended to seal the book away with the rest of the banes, Danar lingered over its pages for just one instant too long. Its cunningly crafted words beguiled him to keep the book by his side. Soon, he read more. And more.

And still more.

The book consumed Danar. He neglected his quest to gather the remaining banes. He withdrew from his family and comrades. The book's dark lore corrupted his spirit and twisted his mind. The lure of the dark power and forbidden knowledge was too much, even for Danar. Danar Rotansin became Eslathagos Malkith—the Dread One. With the vast resources of the banes he had gathered and the knowledge

he had gained from the *Book of Inverted Darkness*, the Dread One withdrew into his tower, also renamed: Jabel Shammar. He emerged only a few years later, launching an attack so devastating, it threatened to tear the world asunder. His might knew few bounds, and with his magical aid, the armies he had created or summoned conquered the surrounding lands with ease.

The earth itself, no longer able to tolerate the concentrated evil that Eslathagos Malkith and the banes represented, thrust Jabel Shammar away from it, creating a tall, impossibly high and narrow spire atop which the tower stood, its former pearly hue turned black as night. From there, the Dread One could survey the world—a world he desired to either conquer or crush entirely.

Only the actions of all the mortal races, led by powerful and stalwart heroes (many of whom had been friends and companions of Danar), stopped the forces of Eslathagos Malkith. It is said they carried the battle into the halls of Jabel Shammar itself. When it was over, the Dread One lay defeated. The world's greatest heroes sprawled dead and dismembered all around him. Most of them had lost not only their lives but their souls to their foe's magic and the banes he wielded.

Timeline

Throughout this book, the timeframe during which Danar built the Banewarrens and subsequently became Eslathagos Malkith to threaten all creation has been left intentionally vague. In the playtests, these events took place around 18,000 years ago. In your campaign, the intervening time could be much shorter. At minimum, the DM should allow many centuries—perhaps a thousand years—to have passed since Danar's redemption. The terms "The Dread One" and "Jabel Shammar" should reference legends of mythic proportions. Some people might not have even heard the tale of the saint and his quest. Most people have forgotten the Banewarrens entirely.

Some bit of Danar—the good and true man he had once been—still remained, however. His spirit, now free of corruption, managed to seal the Banewarrens once again. Although his quest remained uncompleted, and some of the banes were released again when he became Eslathagos Malkith, the warrens still contained vault upon vault of evil artifacts, foul creatures, and vile relics that it would keep away from the world at large.

Unless the Banewarrens should ever become unsealed again.

Adventure Synopsis

As the characters mind their own business in the city, they run afoul of a strange dark elf who inadvertently seems to curse the innocent bystanders around him with uncontrollable magical powers. After that strange encounter, the player characters are contacted by either a powerful arcanists' guild (the Inverted Pyramid) or an influential religious group (the Church of Lothian), or both, to investigate the mysterious origin of this dark elf. Could it be the fabled Banewarrens?

Delving deep to investigate, the PCs discover a section of the Banewarrens that was not completely sealed. They encounter members of the Pactlords of the Quaan, an evil group of monstrous creatures intent on getting in to obtain something called the *Black Grail*. The Pactlords breached this section of the Banewarrens recently, their actions loosing the dark elf. They used a *wish* to get past a Sealed Door in the warrens, but a paladin named Kalerecent closed the door again before most of them could get through.

So everything seems fine, except that the PCs learn that this door has a key, and it is in the possession of an evil noble family: House Vladaam. If they want the key, either to use it or secure it, they have to negotiate with the Vladaam family—or steal it from them. And it just so happens that someone wants to help them break into the estate. Except that this someone is family matriarch Navanna Vladaam in disguise. She intends to steal the key back from the PCs, of course; she only wants people to *think* that her family no longer has it.

Now the Inverted Pyramid wants to learn more about the Banewarrens and seal the place back up again. The Church of Lothian, on the other hand, wants to explore. So the PCs head back down into the Banewarrens, dealing with traps and guardians as well as some of the banes, the Pactlords, and Navanna herself. As they explore, they learn of the existence of the *sealing rod,* a magic item that will help reseal the Banewarrens in conjunction with the *warding generators* located throughout the dungeon. It seems that the *generator* in the section that the Pactlords initially penetrated was never entirely functional, explaining how they got inside in the first place.

Eventually, the PCs return to the city to discover the Pactlords operating out of a chapel of the Church of Lothian and learn that a cleric they were dealing with actually works for them. Once they handle the traitorous priest and his lackeys, the adventurers discover an intelligent magic item that once formed one third of the powerful *staff of shards*. They also learn that in the Quaan, an extradimensional realm, the Pactlords possess another part of the staff. This staff, when whole, can destroy the Banewarrens key. Perhaps important now, perhaps important later (that's up to the PCs), but they'll want to collect the staff pieces at some point.

Back in the Banewarrens, the Church of Lothian is looking for a fabled artifact it considers to be of religious importance: the *sword of lies* (which the Church believes is actually the *sword of truth*). It is just this sword the Inverted Pyramid fears, though, because it proves so useful against arcanists. They send in an agent of their own and eventually attempt to seal the Banewarrens entirely, with everyone—including the PCs—still inside.

Once the PCs find a huge shaft known as the Baneheart, they can obtain the *sealing rod* and the last remaining piece

of the *staff of shards*. To get it, they must deal with powerful Pactlords, Navanna Vladaam, and the Malificite: one of the Dread One's most powerful servants.

In the end, the best possible resolution is that the PCs complete the unfinished *warding generator* in the Sealed Door Area, recover the *sealing rod* to seal the opened doors, and use the *staff of shards* to destroy the Banewarrens key. If this occurs, the Banewarrens are sealed forever, with no possibility of anyone ever getting in again.

The PCs in your game might choose a very different path, however.

Running the Adventure

This adventure is a mix of keyed encounters relating to specific locations on a map and event-based encounters that occur when and where the DM wishes. It is not particularly linear, so you might find that the PCs go to the various locations in a very different order than the chapters of this book would suggest. Use the material you find in this book to extrapolate what might happen if the PCs decide to do something not directly covered in the text. Your main concern should be using the nonplayer characters (NPCs) and their various motivations to encourage the PCs (directly or indirectly) to continue exploring the Banewarrens and learn all its secrets.

Treasure distribution in this adventure is nonstandard, due to the nature of the scenario. PCs will fight many guardian monsters and overcome deadly traps only to gain access to evil items they cannot or will not use. Treasure in the form of coins or valuable objects is uncommon in the Banewarrens. Thus, usable treasure in the hands of NPCs and in other places is increased to compensate. PCs should find themselves adequately rewarded and compensated in the long run.

Evil characters, however, will find the Banewarrens to be the treasure trove it sounds like. This is a warning to all DMs who allow players to run evil PCs in this adventure—they will find extremely powerful rewards waiting for them in these dark halls. If the PCs are evil and looking to use the objects they find in the Banewarrens, the DM should actually increase the challenges to make them work for it. Evil PCs could, in fact, end up with multiple artifacts they could use, such as the *Antithesis Stone* and the *Black Grail,* if they complete this adventure. That could pose problems.

Variant Classes

A variant version of the sorcerer and the bard class appear in Malhavoc Press' *Book of Eldritch Might II*. A variant ranger is available in the archives of "The Stuff" column at ‹www.montecook.com›. Where these classes appear in this adventure, the variant versions are used. If you do not have access to these variants or do not wish to use them, converting is simple. Monsters that cast spells "as sorcerers" use the standard sorcerer class, not the variant. For example, the dragons, the couatl, and a few other monsters in this adventure use the standard sorcerer rules from the *Player's Handbook*.

Using This Book

Throughout *The Banewarrens,* an asterisk (*) is used to refer to spells, items, or classes that originate in *The Book of Eldritch Might*. A dagger (†) indicates material from *The Book of Eldritch Might II: Songs and Souls of Power.* Otherwise, all references to spells, feats, and other rules are from the three Core Rulebooks: the *Player's Handbook*, DMG, and MM.

About the Author

Monte Cook *started working professionally in the game industry in 1988. In the employ of Iron Crown Enterprises, he worked on the* Rolemaster *and* Champions *games as an editor, developer, and designer.*

In 1994 Monte came to TSR as a game designer. As a senior game designer with Wizards of the Coast, he codesigned the new edition of Dungeons & Dragons, *authored the* Dungeon Master's Guide, *and designed* Return to the Temple of Elemental Evil. *and the d20 version of* Call of Cthulhu. ***For WizKids games, he recently designed the*** HeroClix ***system of superhero combat. His*** Book of Vile Darkness *is due out from Wizards in October 2002.*

A graduate of the Clarion West writer's workshop, Monte also has published short stories and two novels. In his spare time, he runs two games a week, builds vast dioramas out of LEGO building bricks, and reads a lot of comics.

About the Illustrators

Toren Atkinson *is known by night as the lead singer of the Cthulhu rock band, The Darkest of the Hillside Thickets, but by day he collects Saturday morning cartoons and draws monsters for money.*

Lars Grant-West *made a big splash with his fabulous black-and-white line art in the 3rd Edition Core Rulebooks, and this East Coast artist has gone on to create some impressive cover art as well.*

Game fans worldwide know ***Quinton Hoover*** *for his terrific color work in the* Magic: the Gathering *trading card game.. He lives in the Pacific Northwest.*

Alan Pollack *was born in New Jersey in 1964. He studied at the School of Visual Arts in New York City and in 1991 received his first cover assignment, for TSR's* Dungeon *magazine. Two years later, Alan became a full-time illustrator at TSR. In 1997 he went out on his own and has worked for many roleplaying game companies as well as Del-Rey, ROC, Tor Books, and Wizards of the Coast. Alan lives in Freehold, New Jersey, with his wife, their two children, and his Siberian huskies Xena and Pikachu.*

Although ***Arne Swekel*** *has been keeping busy with color work, including illustrations for the* Harry Potter *trading card game, roleplaying fans know him for his fabulous black-and-white line art from the 3rd Edition Core Rulebooks and many other titles.*

Malhavoc Press

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The Banewarrens *is the second adventure from Malhavoc Press, after the high-level module* Demon God's Fane. *Coming later in the year, look for* Requiem for a God, *also designed by Monte Cook. As a followup to his award-winning* Book of Eldritch Might. *Monte brings you* Book of Eldritch Might III: The Nexus, *coming soon.*

*Current titles are available to purchase in either print or electronic (PDF) format at ‹**www.montecook.com**›*

As the player characters explore the Banewarrens, they encounter fabled evil items and creatures called the banes. These items are mentioned in the rooms where PCs may find them, but are fleshed out fully in the Banes Appendix starting on page 115.

All maps in this adventure use icons explained in the master Map Key on this page.

Certain passages in this adventure refer you to particular pictures in the Illustration Appendix at the end of this book. The illustrations there are meant to serve as visual aids to players as their characters enter a new location. Clicking on each illustration's icon takes you to the larger picture. Because we wanted to offer you a thorough gallery of game-aid pieces in this appendix, you won't see as much art throughout the rest of this book as you do in other Malhavoc Press titles.

If you'd like to expand this adventure, some bonus source material and ideas appear on Monte Cook's website. To find the links to these web enhancements, visit *The Banewarrens* product page at <www.montecook.com/mpress__Bane.html>.

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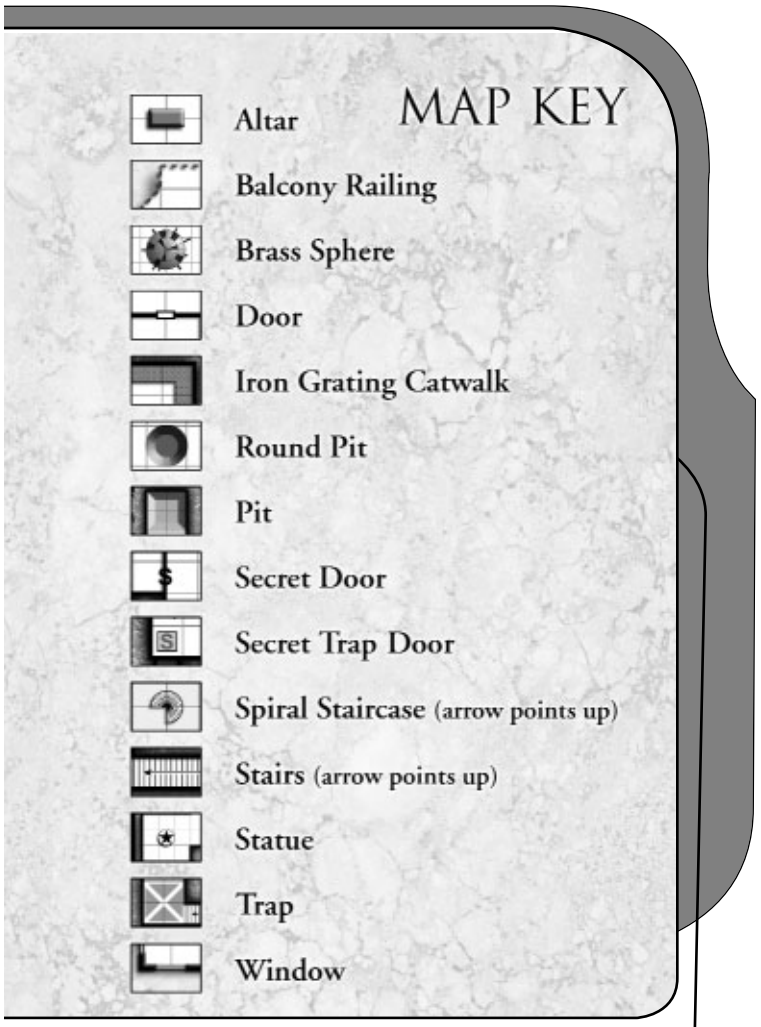


Setting

This adventure can easily be set anywhere, although fairly near a large city is a good idea and very near or under a big city is best. From here on, the adventure offers the city of Ptolus as a standard backdrop. Feel free to use Ptolus or replace it with a city of your own. You could, for example, use a city in the Scarred Lands (by Sword & Sorcery Studio) or Freeport (by Green Ronin Publishing).

Ptolus is a major city of about 30,000 people. It is located near a large bay on the southern end of the Whitewind Sea, and was originally built around a fortress, Dalenguard. Ptolus is built over an abandoned underground dwarven city, Dwarvenhearth, the ancestral home of dwarves known as the Stonelost. Called the "City by the Spire," Ptolus lies in the shadow of a strange rock formation rising impossibly high (almost 3,000 feet) and surrounded by mysterious legends and rumors. These tales tell of ancient battles waged and cities erected on the site. Many of them might be at least somewhat true, for recent developments have revealed vast complexes under the city.

Of late, Ptolus has become a city of adventurers as treasure-seekers have flocked there to explore and plunder the labyrinthine structures beneath the streets. If the stories are true, these catacombs involve the sewers of the city, the remains of an older city (and its sewer system), Dwarven-hearth, and even more, plunging impossibly deep below the present urban area.

Ptolus lies in a cool, rainy coastal region with harsh winters. It serves as an important port on the Whitewind Sea and until recently was part of the Empire of Tarsis. With the collapse of the Imperial government, Ptolus now maintains a somewhat independent status, ruled by a council still dominated by representatives of an Empire far removed from the city's concerns.

For details on Ptolus, see the map on page 8.

The Districts of Ptolus

Ptolus lies between the Spire and the sea. The highest portion of the city, the Noble's Quarter, is built on the very feet of the Spire. From there the level of the city drops down a sharp cliff to Oldtown, and then again into Midtown. Lastly, the final cliffs of Ptolus drop into the sea, with the only flat area at the bottom of those cliffs occupied by the city's docks. Well-worn paths connect the various elevations of the city and help make Ptolus very defensible (although the city has not been attacked in even an elf's lifetime).

The King's River flows through the city, spilling into an eroded chasm in the northwest corner and flowing down to the Whitewind Sea near the docks. The bottom of the chasm, usually called the King's River Gorge, is 80 feet below the level of ground on the north side, but almost 180 feet below on the south side. The south side still bears the old city walls and for-

tifications. A bridge built atop two massive pillars, themselves erected atop two natural rock columns, stretches across the King's River Gorge at a steep angle, leading into the area of the city known as Oldtown. Another bridge stretches across the chasm with the help of another rock column, joining Oldtown with the Rivergate District. Although Oldtown is higher, the difference in elevation between these two districts is not as steep, so the slope of the bridge seems far less noticeable.

Imperial Identification Papers

One relic of the fading Empire still common in Ptolus is the use of identification papers. The Empire issues these to all citizens, and they are required for purchases over 100 gp. Guards and other officials also can demand to see one's papers at any time. Identification papers include a person's name, race, place of birth, current residence, occupation and a general physical description. Forgeries are fairly common.

In the adventure, the use of identification papers allows the PCs to find out the names of their fallen foes (if they search the bodies). The papers can sometimes—if not falsified—provide useful information.

While the NPC entries in this book don't refer to these papers, DMs should assume that characters in Ptolus carry them.

The North Market

When one enters the city from the north, one is greeted with the sights and smells of a busy marketplace. Well-worn cobblestone streets are covered with vendors in wooden booths, pushing carts, or simply hawking the wares they tote in massive baskets on their backs. Fresh foods of all kinds—fish and shellfish from the sea, fruit from the orchards to the north, and breads and pastries from right here in the city being favorites—are available in any quantity. Other goods are for sale here as well, in small shops, tents, or from the backs of wagons. The city guards patrol this busy area to keep thieves and pickpockets from running rampant. Rumor has it that the guard employs sorcerers who patrol the area invisibly, using spells to keep an eye out for not only traditional thieves, but magically aided ones as well. They watch for invisible people, overt use of charm or compulsion magic, and similar tricks.

The South Market

To locals, the North Market is simply "the Market," while this area is the "South Market." Unlike its counterpart, the South Market is not an open-air marketplace. It has fewer vendors dealing out of carts and more established shops and business places. Goods usually cost more in the South Market, but a buyer is far more likely to find trustworthy and reliable businesspeople here. As in the North Market, many of those who work here also live here, so the district has substantial residential sections.

Midtown

As the central area of the city, Midtown is both a commercial and a residential center. It is also where one finds a great deal of the entertainment offerings of Ptolus, in the form of pubs and taverns, as well as theaters, dance halls, gambling dens, and more. Visitors are directed here, as most of the temporary lodgings in the city can be found in Midtown.

Oldtown

When Ptolus was founded, it existed only as a small community surrounding a fortress called Dalenguard. The fortress' original purpose was to keep the area clear of evil creatures, drawn by the power of the Banewarrens and Jabel Shammar. Over the years, the community grew into an important port, and the need for Dalenguard as a wilderness bastion waned. Today, the area surrounding the old fortress (still used by the Imperial appointed ruler of the city, the Commissar) is known as Oldtown. It sits atop a ridge higher than most of the rest of Ptolus, but still lower than the Noble's Quarter.

The stone and marble buildings of Oldtown reflect a grander, earlier age. Columns flanking majestic entrances, tall stone towers, and buildings with three or even four stories are common sights here. Yet all are marked with the signs of age and wear. Today many of the buildings are used to house the bureaucracy the Empire forces upon the city. Still others are museums or homes for the wealthy (who are not quite wealthy enough to live in the Noble's Quarter). There are wonderful theaters, auditoriums, and even a grand sporting arena in this large district of the city. Also located here is the Delver's Guild, an association that provides assistance in the form of maps, reference material, and equipment to explorers of the ancient dwarven city, Dwarvenhearth, which lies below the streets of Ptolus.

The Look and Feel of Ptolus

Ptolus looks a little like a Germanic/European city from the late medieval period. The buildings usually have stone first stories with wooden upper stories. The exception here is the Oldtown District, where many of the buildings seem more classical, with impressive, almost Roman-style facades and lots of marble columns.

It rains more often than not in Ptolus—at least, that's the way it seems. Winters are cold, gray, and wet, but summers are dry and mild. Occasionally, a cold, razorlike wind comes off the Whitewind Sea, but usually it's quite calm. The smell of sea salt fills the air when it's not overpowered, such as near the leatherworking shops, the slaughterhouses, or the breweries of the Guildsman District.

One always feels the presence of magic in Ptolus—a spellcaster flies over the city, a mephit scurries down an alleyway bearing a message, or some adventurer walks down the street followed by his umber hulk companion.

The Temple District

Although Lothian is the dominant deity of the city, Ptolus' cosmopolitan residents revere hundreds of other gods as well. Temples, churches, shrines, and small monasteries fill this district, with the inaccurately named Street of a Million Gods running through it all. Even the bridge across the King's River in the Temple District has small shrines built upon and into it.

The Rivergate District

Strictly a residential area, the Rivergate District is as close to a "middle class" neighborhood as Ptolus gets. It is located on a rise of land, surrounded by cliffs on all sides except the southeast, where a steep slope (mostly free of buildings and covered in trees) rolls down to the North Market and the main North Gate.

The Necropolis

A city this old tends to have a large graveyard, and Ptolus is no exception. The city's vast Necropolis is built on a few rolling hills, now completely covered with mausoleums, crypts, and graves. The entire Necropolis is surrounded by a wall, and the only four gates in are guarded. These guards' primary duty is to warn people not to stay in the Necropolis into the night and to watch for grave robbers. Most everyone knows there are undead in the Necropolis, but various churches and holy orders do their best to keep the problem under control.

The Docks

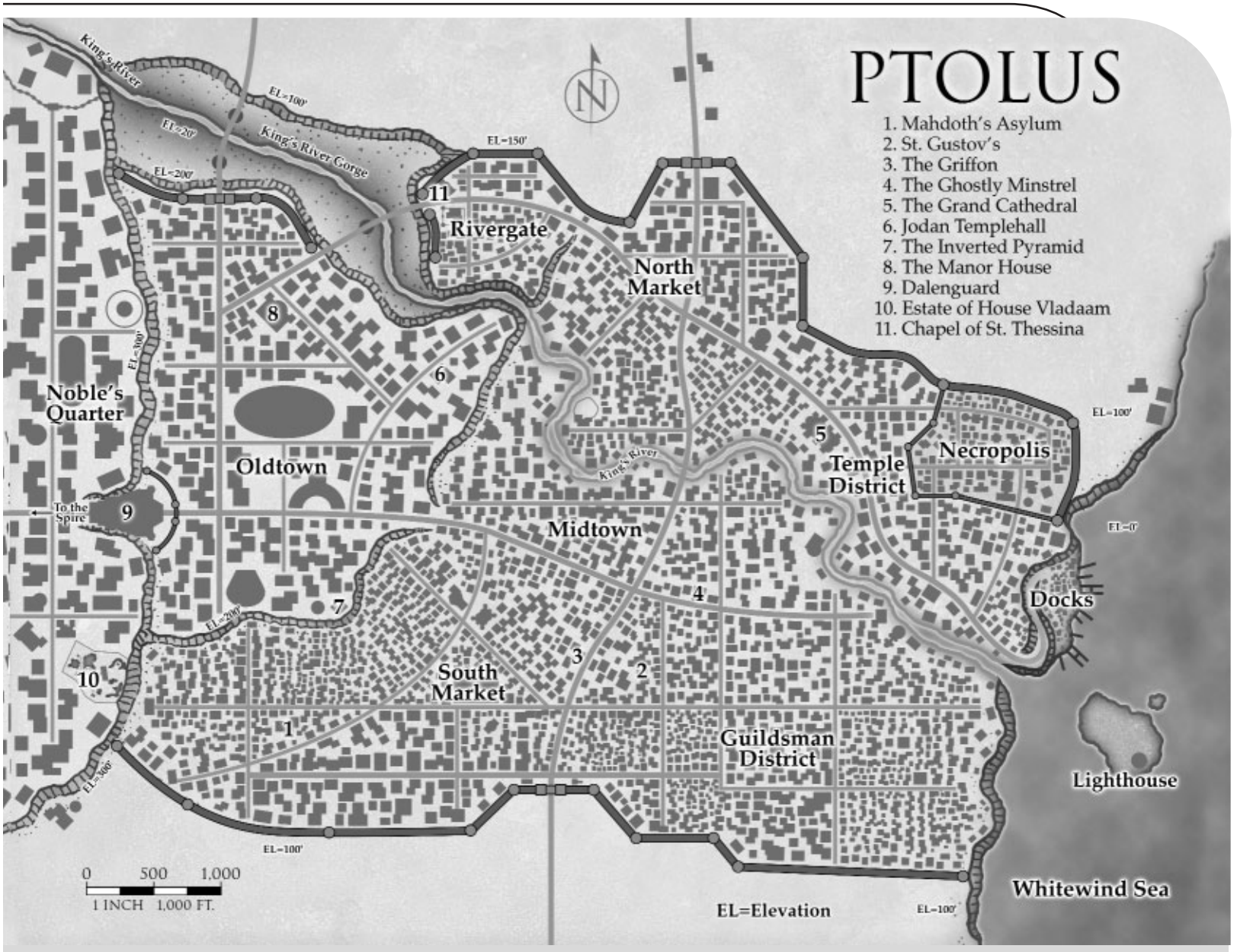
Far below the level of the city's streets, the docks rest at the bottom of the cliffs on a narrow, sandy strip of land. The buildings are mostly wooden and sit slightly askew from one another because the whole (small) district is built upon slowly sinking sand. Even the streets are sand. A dozen ships moor in the deep waters here at any given time—sometimes far more than a dozen. This is a particularly rough area of the city, both because of the influx of sailors and because it is inconvenient for the city guard to get down to patrol very often.

The Guildsman District

Ptolus teems with guilds. Every type of artisan, smith, or other professional belongs to a guild of similarly trained and employed individuals. These guilds enjoy a strong voice in the city's council. This district is full of tanneries, smithies, foundries, textile houses, and other production facilities as well as warehouses, stockyards, and similar storage places. Thus, not surprisingly, this district has a distinct odor. Unless one works here, one rarely finds a reason to visit, although this district sports a few taverns and other businesses catering to the working class.

The Noble's Quarter

With its row upon row of manors and estates, Ptolus has no shortage of wealth or wealthy people. Although technically



outside the city's walls, the Noble's Quarter climbs the cliffs abutting the Spire itself. Travelers can reach the area only via a single avenue up from Oldtown. This road goes through the fortress of Dalenguard itself before reaching the Noble's Quarter. The heights where this district now sits were easily defensible in the city's younger days; originally, all Ptolus residents could gather here in times of emergency, secure behind Dalenguard's stout gates. However, as time passed and the city grew, the elite class sought these enviable heights for their residences, leaving the less wealthy to expand into the lower quarters. Nowadays the gates into this district, other than Dalenguard's, are reserved for times of emergency, but no invader has ever come to sack Ptolus.

The largest estates in this section of town belong to the 10 noble families that have held power in the area—to one degree or another—for centuries. Other sites of interest in the Noble's Quarter include fabulous eating establishments and theaters, a horse racing track, and an opera house.

Organizations

Although a city of this size is full of influential people and groups, only a few pertain to this adventure. They include the Church of Lothian, the Inverted Pyramid, the Pactlords of the Quaan, and House Vladaam. Since these groups are so important to the adventure and the web of intrigue can get a little thick, use the following section as both a briefing and a handy reference.

The Church of Lothian

Lothian was a mortal who lived around 1,500 years ago. He ascended to godhood based on his own good works and strength of spirit. The Church of Lothian is the most powerful religion in the Empire, and thus in Ptolus. So closely tied are the Empire and the Church of Lothian that the head of the religion's hierarchy is known as the Emperor of the Church. Alongside the traditional, secular Emperor, he rules over all Imperial lands and citizens. The Emperor of the Church lives in far-off Tarsis but comes to Ptolus occasionally, as his son—the Prince of the Church—lives here.

When it initially spread its influence as the Empire grew, the Church was far less tolerant of divergent beliefs and even of arcane magic than it is today. The Church of Lothian released the Edict of Deviltry centuries ago, proclaiming all arcane spellcasting to be an evil act. (The more enlightened modern Church rescinded the Edict.)

In Ptolus, many different chapels located throughout the city are devoted to Lothian. The Church maintains its headquarters in the Grand Cathedral in the Temple District.

An order of knighthood, the Order of the Dawn, serves the Church of Lothian as elite defenders of the faith. While the low-ranking members are warriors and fighters, the higher ranks include paladins and a few martial clerics.

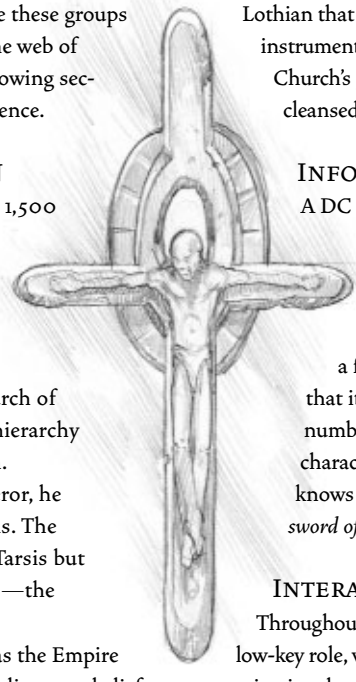
Goals

In general, the Church of Lothian seeks to convert the heathen and protect and nurture the faithful. Far more than typical organized religions, the Church of Lothian remains involved in day-to-day government administration and the making (and sometimes enforcing) of laws. Specifically in this adventure, the Church wants to find out what happened to its knight, Kalerecent, then recover the *sword of truth*, lost in the Banewarrens. Prophecies have told the high-ranking followers of Lothian that the sword will be instrumental in furthering the Church's goals once it is cleansed of the taint that now makes it the *sword of lies*.

Lothian

Lothian is the lawful good god of justice and purity. His followers usually take one aspect or the other (justice or purity), focusing on either Lothian's lawful or good qualities. In his lawful aspect, Lothian is the Lawgiver. In his good aspect, he is called the Daykeeper. In either case, he remains a staunch foe of cruelty and destruction, and harbors a particular hatred of undead. He promotes peace, harmony, and safety. Once a mortal, Lothian gave himself in self-sacrifice and was killed before rising again as a deity in his own right. His symbol is an ankh crucifix.

Lothian grants the following domains to his clerics: Good, Law, Protection, and Sun. His clerics normally wear white and blue, although on high holy days they wear golden garments. Lothian's favored weapon is the longsword. Lothian's priests serve as judges and officials in the government of the Empire. They devote themselves toward proselytizing among those who have not yet heard his message of peace and protection.



Information to Discover

A DC 10 Gather Information or Knowledge (religion) check allows a PC to learn all the basics of the religion.

A Knowledge (religion) or Bardic Knowledge check with a DC of 25 reveals a few details about the *sword of truth,* including that it has the power to discern lies, as well as a number of abilities that overcome arcane magic. A character who makes a successful DC 30 check knows the *sword of truth* was cursed to become the *sword of lies* and is stored in the Banewarrens.

Interaction in the Adventure

Throughout most of the adventure, the Church takes a low-key role, with a few individuals (like Kalerecent) getting involved in the action.

Members of the Church of Lothian act coolly toward members of the Inverted Pyramid but do not directly oppose them. While they might seem a little wary of those in House Vladaam, they have no real quarrel with them, either. Particularly intolerant of nonhumanoid monsters, however, members of the Church likely attack any member of the Pactlords of the Quaan on sight.

The Church in Your Campaign

You can, of course, replace the Church of Lothian with virtually any good-aligned religion in your campaign. The Church's links with the Empire can be worked out of the adventure easily.

The Inverted Pyramid

In ages past, the Inverted Pyramid was a great foe of the Church of Lothian. When the Edict of Deviltry was issued, a number of mages gathered together and formed a secret society dedicated to preserving arcanists and their lore. They named themselves after their secret lair. High above Ptolus, a pyramid of stone, more than 200 feet across, floats invisibly and upside down. Within, the members of this organization meet, store their valuable books and supplies, and craft magic items and other creations. Heliothil, a magical ore found naturally in the mountains to the west, has been worked into the pyramid. Heliothil has an inverse reaction to gravity, and thus the inverted pyramid floats. Its actual location—and even its very existence—is unknown to most people.

The organization is basically a mages' guild, although in truth the Inverted Pyramid is far more than that. It is concerned with preserving magical lore and all things arcane from those it believes would eradicate such knowledge. Its membership includes most of the very powerful arcanists in Ptolus (and probably the world).

Goals

The Inverted Pyramid's only group goal is fostering arcane studies and its members' well being. As much as many members would like to explore its passages and vaults for new arcane lore, the group has determined that it is not in its best interests for the Banewarrens to remain open. This is for a number of reasons. First, a bane—or any new artifact—becomes a threat to them and their secrecy. Powerful magic in the hands of nonmembers is a dangerous thing. Second, they know the *sword of lies* waits within the warrens, and they have no desire to let the Church of Lothian obtain it. Lastly, the Inverted Pyramid makes its money by supplying a front organization with magic items to sell. An influx of new magic is bad for the group economically.

In addition, the arcanists of the Inverted Pyramid want to learn the secrets of the Banewarrens' sealing magic, since it has proven effective for so long. They would love to get their hands on that magic to fortify their own structures.

Information to Discover

Created many years ago as a response to the Church of Lothian's harsh Edict of Deviltry, the Inverted Pyramid has remained extremely secretive. The general public has no idea where the group's base of operations is, and no one knows any real details about its membership. Characters who make a Gather Information, Bardic Knowledge, or Knowledge (local) check (DC 15) know or learn of the group's existence and origins. A DC 25 check provides a little more information: that the group literally resides in an upside-down pyramid that floats above the city and can be reached only by teleportation.

Interaction in the Adventure

Early on, the Inverted Pyramid serves merely as a catalyst to get the adventure started. Later it can become a valuable ally. However, even later in the adventure the group actually may become an opponent, as its members attempt to seal the Banewarrens—even with the PCs inside. In the end, it becomes obvious that the group serves nothing other than its own interests.

Although no longer openly antagonistic toward the Church of Lothian, the Inverted Pyramid fears that, at any time, the religion could fall into the grip of its more right-wing clergy and oppose arcane magic again. While this seems extremely unlikely, this paranoia keeps the Inverted Pyramid watching the Church of Lothian closely and with great distrust.

Ostensibly allied with House Vladaam (the head of House Sadar, a Vladaam ally, ranks highly in the organization), the Inverted Pyramid in fact does not trust them and would have no compunction about eliminating a wild card like Navanna.

The Inverted Pyramid in Your Campaign

You can use any mysterious guild of arcanists in lieu of the Inverted Pyramid. However, due to their secretive nature, it is not difficult to drop the group into an existing campaign. It is quite possible that the PCs may have dwelled in the area for some time without hearing of the Inverted Pyramid.

The Pactlords of the Quaan

Extremely few people in Ptolus have ever heard of the Pactlords of the Quaan. This group formed in ancient times as the main humanoid races began to populate the world. A few intelligent nonhuman creatures saw this coming threat and resented the power the newcomers wielded. Basing themselves in the secret extradimensional realm called the Quaan, they made a pact to work together to destroy their common humanoid enemy. This pact is magically binding,

which compels even the most chaotic members to keep it.

Pactlords include individuals from all intelligent monstrous species: mind flayers, beholders, aboleths, lamias, medusas, yuan-ti, and even dragons. Membership never includes undead and virtually never outsiders. Because only individuals join the Pactlords—not groups—one is just as likely to encounter two wildly different Pactlords together (a beholder and a mind flayer, for example) as two of the same type of creature.

The Pactlords of the Quaan frequently use minions like trolls, ogres, giants, athach, and other less intelligent beings. These are frequently called the Pactslaves. Sometimes they trick even humans, elves, or other humanoids into working with the Pactslaves, and thus ultimately for the Pactlords—creatures dedicated to their very destruction.

Goals

In general, the Pactlords want to eradicate humans, elves, dwarves, halflings, and gnomes from the face of the earth—in that order. Since that goal is still quite far from coming to fruition, they currently want to gain more and more power. Right now, they have set themselves upon the quest for the *Black Grail*, an artifact of great power said to have been trapped long ago in the Banewarrens. Through a great deal of information gathering and research, they have ascertained a way to enter the Banewarrens and have set things in motion to break in and obtain the object of their desire.

Information to Discover

Most of the details to learn about this group come up in the adventure. A DC 30 Gather Information or Bardic Knowledge check reveals the basics of the Pactlords' identity: a group of inhuman monsters bound together by a magical pact. An equally difficult (DC 30) check reveals that "Quaan" is a mysterious place—a magical creation of an elf wizard named Maeritha Moonrise—that does not exist on this plane.

Interaction in the Adventure

The actions of the Pactlords of the Quaan get the adventure started. Their unsealing of the Banewarrens looses a few horrors upon the city of Ptolus, alerting others to their activities. Even though they are initially foiled, the Pactlords prove persistent and extremely intelligent. Their actions fuel many of the events in the adventure. Eventually the PCs may travel to Quaan itself to rebuild the *staff of shards* that can destroy the only key allowing access to the Banewarrens.

The Pactlords hate everyone else involved in the adventure and are likely to kill any group they come upon.

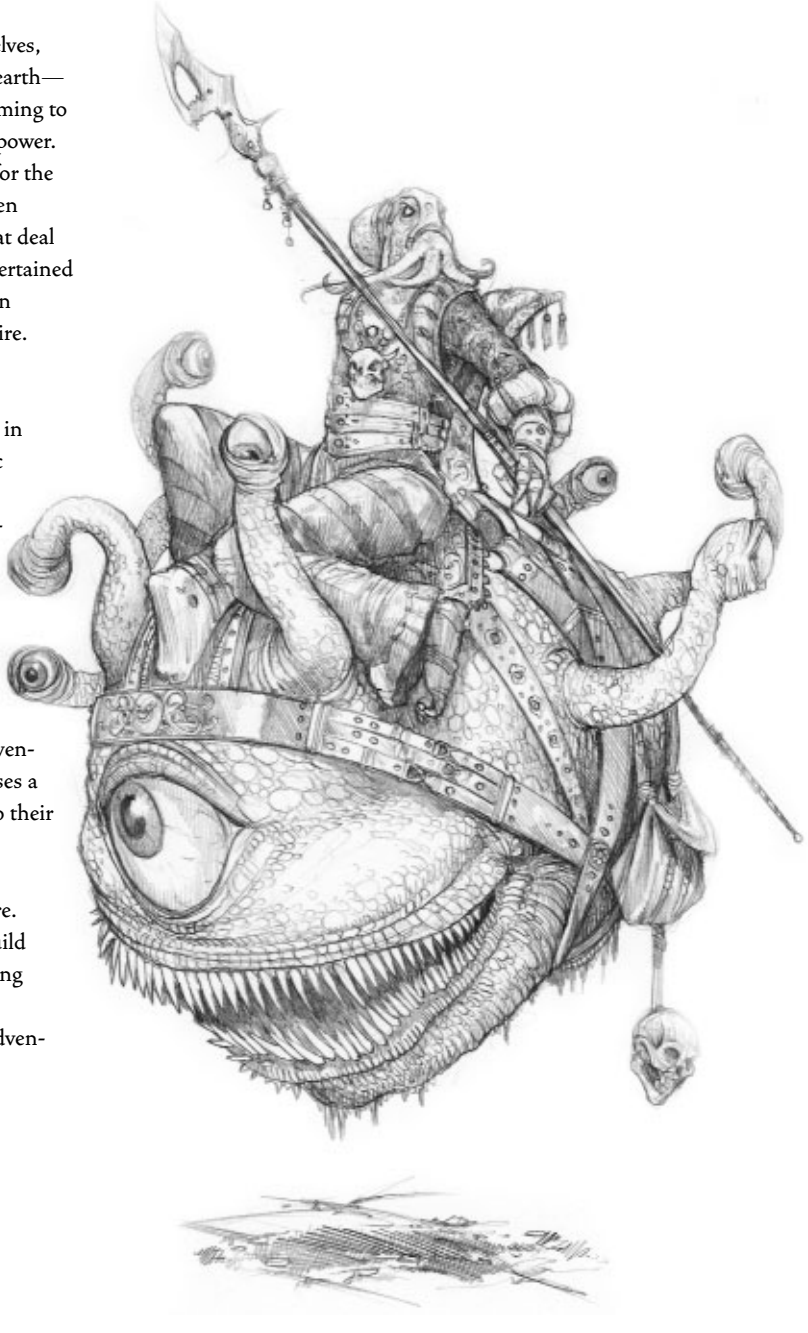
The Pactlords in Your Campaign

Like the Inverted Pyramid, you can easily insert the Pactlords into any campaign. Only a select few know they exist. In fact, their presence in the world is meant to be a sudden surprise to the PCs in this adventure.

House Vladaam

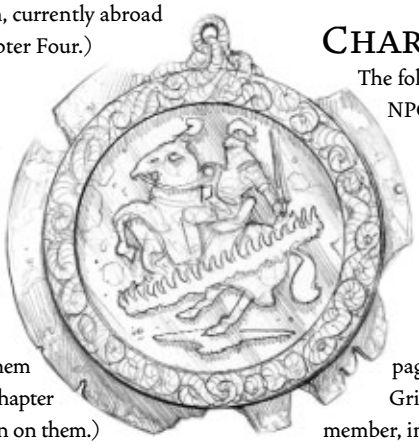
Ptolus has 10 noble families, all of whom claim a special status by ancestral right. Although the Empire does not officially recognize their titles, Ptolus is far enough removed from the heart of Empire that local traditions and beliefs still grant the noble houses hereditary seats on the city's ruling council. Plus, most of them are quite wealthy, and with affluence comes influence.

House Vladaam might be the oldest of the noble houses. It is certainly the most decadent and corrupt. Unknown to most, the members of this noble family trace their lineage back to an



ancient race of demonic entities called the Natharl'nacna, now said by loremasters to sleep below this city. Today, the family funds a number of criminal organizations, gaining profit from theft, extortion, smuggling, illegal gambling, assassination, and trade in slaves, drugs, and evil magic items.

The house's leader is Iristul Vladaam, currently abroad seeking the six *hungerswords*. (See Chapter Four.)



Goals

House Vladaam seeks the awakening and return of the Natharl'nacna. Aside from gaining as much evil power as they can, they want to find a path to the Caverns of the Galchutt where the Natharl'nacna sleep, said to lie deep below the Banewarrens. (These caverns are not detailed here, but DMs can add them if they like. Yaeshla, the elven dagger in Chapter Six ,could be a good source of information on them.) Barring that, they would settle for finding a way into Jabel Shammar above the Banewarrens atop the Spire.

Information to Discover

A Gather Information (or Bardic Knowledge) check reveals information on House Vladaam based on the result:

Result	Knowledge
10	House Vladaam is one of the city's 10 noble houses. Although they officially have no political power under Imperial Law, the Ptolus council does recognize the houses to a degree. And what they may lack in political clout, they make up for in wealth.
15	Although they have their allies, House Vladaam generally does not enjoy the trust of the other houses.
20	The leader of House Vladaam, Iristul, is rumored to have a decadent and unsavory appetite.
25	The Vladaam family's ancestors were not all human, or even humanoid.
30	The members of House Vladaam descended from a being known as Vladaam, one of the ancient Vested of the Galchutt (servants of the evil demonic beings known also as the Natharl'nacna).

Interaction in the Adventure

It is possible, but unlikely, that the PCs may never come to know the noble family's full involvement in the adventure, since the main player, Navanna, often operates in disguise.

House Vladaam would be interested in an alliance with the Pactlords of the Quaan; the Pactlords would never truly agree to such a thing but might attempt to use Vladaam. Most of the family believes the Inverted Pyramid to be in their control and look down with contempt at the Church of Lothian.

House Vladaam in Your Campaign

Any noble family with a sinister bent could be used instead of House Vladaam. Conceivably, any evil organization with a little political clout that operates in the existing campaign could be used.

Characters

The following is a list of the important named NPCs the PCs may interact with.

Lothianites

Kalerecent, half-elf paladin of Lothian; page 28

Moston Ferelurth, young human cleric of Lothian; page 83

Helgert Hume, warrior of Lothian; page 80

Griman Inneston, Order of the Dawn member, informant for House Vladaam; page 31

Terestir Malacon, mirror master advisor; page 31

Vaesillian Moonheart, elf paladin of Lothian; page 80

Brother Heth Neferul, St. Thessina's pastor; page 31

Sharah Nestor, paladin leader of Lothian's delvers; page 80

Brother Tobias Thad, Church of Lothian official; page 31

Brother Fabitor Thisk, cleric of Lothian, page 20

Sister Daliana Varaun, cleric of Lothian; page 31

Sister Mara von Witten, cleric of Lothian; page 31

House Vladaam

Stegoar, House Vladaam kennel keeper; page 38

Guire Haltiss, urban werewolf, Navanna's personal agent; page 37

Degar Ravenspell, dwarf wizard prisoner; page 40

Nicalon Regelis, a Knight of the Chord (actually Navanna in disguise); page 35

Teilbarith Starlook, halfling spy for House Vladaam; page 31

Aliaster Vladaam, Navanna's sorcerer brother; page 37

Iristul Vladaam, fighter/blackguard head of House; page 37

Navanna Vladaam, rogue/fighter, acting head of House Vladaam; page 35

Inverted Pyramid

Jevicca Norr, wizard of the Inverted Pyramid, page 20

Avach Ur-Tesstrin, "reprogrammed" eldritch warrior member of the Inverted Pyramid; page 79

Pactlords of the Quaan

Azz, harpy slavekeeper Pactlord; page 71

Barrol, half-orc barbarian Pactlord; page 65

Charch-Pahn, ancient beholder, original Pactlord; page 75

Chast, athach Pactlord; page 110

Derimach, lamia Pactlord; page 29

Ephitas, dark naga Pactlord; page 67
Erieta, elf woman, disguise for Saarachk; page 81
Erzak, gnoll Pactlord with dire ape; page45
Ferendis, half-fiend red dragon Pactlord; page 109
Ios, minotaur warrior Pactlord; page 24
Kikanuile, green hag Pactlord team leader; page 42
Kularas, orc Pactlord; page 21
Li, phasm Pactlord; page 61
Nisslentar, ettercap Pactlord with spider; page 43
Ostarach, ogre-mage Pactlord; page 43
Saarachk, male aranea Pactlord; page 81
Sarth, bugbear fighter Pactlord; page 110
S'Errit, lizardfolk cleric Pactlord; page 110
Solonar, half-elf/half-orc blackguard; page 103
Thamas, human man, disguise for Li; page 81
Trolgir, bugbear cleric Pactlord; page 68
Verd, Black Manor ooze mephit lackey; page 78
Verochin, lamia Pactlord and new team leader; page 24
Vo-Nul, phase spider Pactlord; page 44
Wiver, hieractosphinx Pactlord; page 43
Xichlanatlazochtal, couatl foe of Charch-Pahn; page 74
Yaeshla, elven dagger, part of the *staff of shards*; page 69
Yuinthu, mind flayer Pactlord team leader; page 43
Zsavri, Black Manor yuan-ti abomination Pactlord ; page 77
Norsu Goldenvein, dwarf fighter Pactslave; page 44
Brother Heth Neferul, St. Thessina's pastor; page 68
Feldon Renlein, halfling rogue false priest Pactslave; page 63
The Eight-Bladed Rissard Brothers, Pactslaves; page 65

Banewarrens Residents

Callin, astral deva prisoner; page 91
Darkstar, young adult trapped blue dragon; page 104
Dukett, vrock servant of the Dread One; page 91
Geristranomos, Danar's magical construct; page 51
The Malificite, fallen planetar (once was Bastion); page 113
Saggarintys the Silver King, imprisoned dragon; page 96
Vallacor, prison warden and torturer; page 89
Tirranth Inver, evil spirit in plate armor, page 55
Trese Philipin, now the betrayed; page 85

Ptolus Residents

Hallusiun Everfar, head of the Knights of the Chord order in Ptolus' Jodan Templehall; page 35
Tabaen Farsong, insane elf noble; page 19
Naddir Fastidian, gnome in the North Market; page 14
Ishara Jare, human loremaster; page 33
Vesto Kama, her assistant; page 33
Myreth, elf owner of a Midtown magic shop; page 14
Nicalon Regelis, a Knight of the Chord; page 35
Admah Sheron, a bard at the Ghostly Minstrel; page 62
Danneth Sonnel, Mahdoth's Asylum caretaker; page 33

Adventure Hooks

All you need initially to hook the PCs into this adventure is simply to get them into the city. Chapter One describes how the initial encounters "happen around" the PCs. Their involvement in those events brings on subsequent hooks to really get them into the adventure.

However, the adventure becomes even more exciting if, as things move along, the PCs feel motivated on their own to get into the Banewarrens. You can motivate them in many ways.

- Some object of great importance to the PCs, revealed earlier in the campaign, is rumored to lie within the Banewarrens.
- The PCs might see one of the other groups involved as direct rivals or enemies. Perhaps they already hate the Pactlords of the Quaan or House Vladaam.
- The characters seek the *staff of shards*. One part of it lies in Ptolus (in the belfry of the Chapel of St. Thessina; see Chapter Six), one part lies in the Quaan, and one part lies in the deepest reaches of the Banewarrens.

Ptolus Technology

Although you may not wish to adopt this aspect of Ptolus for a more traditional fantasy campaign, the setting has a moderately higher level of technology than a standard medieval setting. For example, the firearms presented in the DMG are available in the city. None of the NPCs in the adventure is equipped with such weapons, but you can easily replace a few bows or crossbows (magical or otherwise) with pistols or rifles if you like.

A few other post-medieval devices are common as well. One that figures somewhat in this adventure is the printing press. Ptolus produces newssheets: small, one-page newspaper-like fliers. Other clockwork mechanisms—such as pocket watches, mechanical music boxes, and similar simple devices—are also available, if the DM wishes.

While running this adventure, remember to always give the PCs sufficient motivation to go farther and farther into the Banewarrens. Their ultimate goal should be eventually to reach Tremoc Korin, the Baneheart (see Chapter Nine), so they can obtain the *sealing rod* and seal up the warrens once again.

Returning to the City

From time to time throughout the adventure, the PCs will return to Ptolus—either for information, healing, rest, equipment, or because they have come to a dead end.

Healing

If the PCs need healing they cannot provide for themselves, any spell up to 5th level is freely available at any temple in the Temple District at the prices listed in the *Player's Handbook;* they are offered by casters of the minimum level required to cast the spell. In this cosmopolitan city, any religion a PC looks for probably has a temple or shrine in the Temple District's "Street of a Million Gods." Even some worshippers of evil gods have temples here, allowed as long as they commit no crimes in their services and rites.

In general, spells higher than 5th level require 24 hours' notice. A PC who needs a *greater restoration* spell, for example, can't find it available immediately. At the DM's discretion, the spell might be available immediately, but for double the required donation to the temple's coffers (because the spell required use of a scroll, the spell was originally intended for someone else, or something of that nature).

Information

Chapter Three offers guidance on gathering information in Ptolus. In general, news—distributed via crudely printed one-page newssheets—spreads fast in the city. Rumors spread even faster.

Rest

The PCs can find any number of inns or flophouses in which to rest and recuperate, or they can rent a flat for 10 gp per month. If they seek to buy property, a small house in Midtown costs about 2,000 gp.

Equipment

Visitors can buy and sell equipment costing up to 40,000 gp in the large city that is Ptolus. Magical gear can be bought and resold in Midtown at *Myreth's Oddities*—a shop run by a 13th-level elf wizard named Myreth and guarded by powerful wards and a couple ogre fighters. Myreth also buys other valuables for a fair price (gems, jewelry, artwork, and so on) and offers spell components and similar wares as well as resale magic items. The DM should determine at any given time what magic items Myreth has on hand. For 100 gp per item he also can *identify* items brought to him, with a 24-hour turnaround.

A place called *Potions and Elixirs*, also in Midtown, offers a large stock of potions for sale. A number of arcanists offer scrolls for sale all over town. A few other places sell potions as well, and most temples sell divine scrolls and potions to help fund their religion. A graven one* gnome named Naddir Fastidian in the North Market makes etched object runes* and item images* for those willing to pay twice what it costs him in gold to make them.

To have any other magic item made to order, the PCs must contact the *Dreaming Apothecary*. This secretive group employs agents scattered throughout the city. When a character makes an appointment with an agent, that night, a *Dreaming Apothecary* representative visits the character in her dreams. The representative takes the order and magically spirits away the payment—the money must be near the sleeper in an obvious location. It usually takes two weeks to fill an order, unless the character will pay up to 50 percent more for a "rush." The item is delivered directly to the customer by a special form of teleportation. No one knows exactly where the Apothecary makes these items, or even who they are, but one thing is for sure: The manner in which they conduct their business almost completely negates the risk of theft. Considering the value of some of their goods, one cannot blame them. (Rumors abound that others who attempt to start up magic item creation businesses face mysterious fires or sometimes simply just disappear. While these are unsubstantiated, Myreth is always quick to point out, "I only handle resale—I don't make anything!")

If the PCs free Degar Ravenspell under the Vladaam estate in Chapter Four, he can make magic items for them.

* See *The Book of Eldritch Might*.

The Authorities

PCs looking to get help from the city authorities against their foes will be disappointed, but not because the authorities are incompetent or uncaring. The Commissar of the city (appointed by the Empire) commands a force of more than 100 troops at all times to police the city, along with a few dozen elite individuals (captains, mages, clerics, etc.). This well-trained and well-paid force, however, has its hands full just maintaining order in the city. Helping to enforce the laws is a special order of monks called the Sisterhood of Silence. These nonspeaking female monks patrol the streets and apprehend criminals, even though they are not officially sanctioned to do so. A small unit of the Sisters of Silence always has a male eunuch with them to speak on their behalf.

Nevertheless, neither the city guard nor the Sisterhood of Silence is willing to go down into the Banewarrens and fight monsters. Nor are they likely to help against House Vladaam, a well-known and influential noble family. (In fact, PCs breaking into House Vladaam's estate in Chapter Four may find themselves hunted by the authorities if things go terribly wrong.) Alerting them to the problem of Brother Heth Neferul in Chapter Six produces no immediate results, either. Because of the strong ties between the Church of Lothian and the Empire, the Commissar's troops are not quick to investigate, let alone apprehend, a cleric of Lothian. They will demand proof and authorization from their superiors.

Player characters should take care not to run afoul of the authorities. For example, while obvious things like murder and theft are illegal in Ptolus, so are compulsion spells cast upon citizens (locals frown on *charming* shopkeepers to get a better price) and spells of mass destruction cast within the city proper (no *fireballs* or *disintegrate*). Any spell with the evil descriptor is also illegal; in particular the authorities hate *animate dead* and other spells that bring more undead to the city. They also prosecute people severely for doing anything that spreads disease—including casting *contagion.*

Banewarrens Specifics

The Banewarrens is a vast place—even larger, in fact, than detailed here (the DM is free to create more sections of Outer Vault areas; see Chapter Five). It was also built rather haphazardly, with Danar adding new chambers and vaults as he obtained new banes. Since the same man created it all, however, its structure has a number of uniform features.

It is important to remember that Danar built the Banewarrens under a tall, rocky precipice, but the earth's reaction to the banes turned this small mountain into what is now known as the Spire. That means the central portion of the warrens was thrust upward from the rest. This geological movement tore the whole place apart but, thanks to Danar's reinforcing magic and magical materials, only small sections actually collapsed. After this upheaval, joining areas (see Chapter Eight, the Inner Vaults, Areas 44 to 53) and the central Baneheart shaft were created to allow access to all of the now separated vaults.

Doors

Unless otherwise specified, doors are steel. A typical door in the Banewarrens has a hardness of 10, 60 hit points, and a Break DC of 28.

Secret doors are normally stone. They have a hardness of 8, 60 hit points, and a Break DC of 28.

The text also mentions **Vault Doors,** which protect specific vaults. These doors are steel, covered with etched runes of a warding nature. When they were shut, the seams were filled with a magical metallic substance to further keep them permanently closed. They have a hardness of 10, 120 hit points, and a Break DC of 35. To open the lock requires an Open Locks check (DC 30 unless specified otherwise). They have an SR of 18 when it comes to spells cast upon them, such as *knock* or *disintegrate*.

Lastly, there are **Sealed Doors**. These doors look like Vault Doors but are completely impervious to physical blows and all spells short of a *wish* or *miracle.* Even *passwall* or *disintegrate* spells have no effect.

Walls

Walls, unless otherwise specified, are masonry stone reinforced with steel girding and occasionally large steel plates (placed after the geologic upheaval in the area). The walls of the Banewarrens within an area of Sealed Doors magically extend to the Ethereal Plane. They prevent any sort of teleportation magic from passing through or by them. They are impervious to physical blows and all spells, such as *passwall* or *disintegrate.* Even *wish* and *miracle* have no effect.

Once a Sealed Door gives access to a part of the Banewarrens, however, the walls in that area lose some of their magical effects. While still virtually impervious, the walls become subject to the effects of spells of 6th level or higher, and they no longer block teleportation spells or ethereal creatures.

Ceilings and Floors

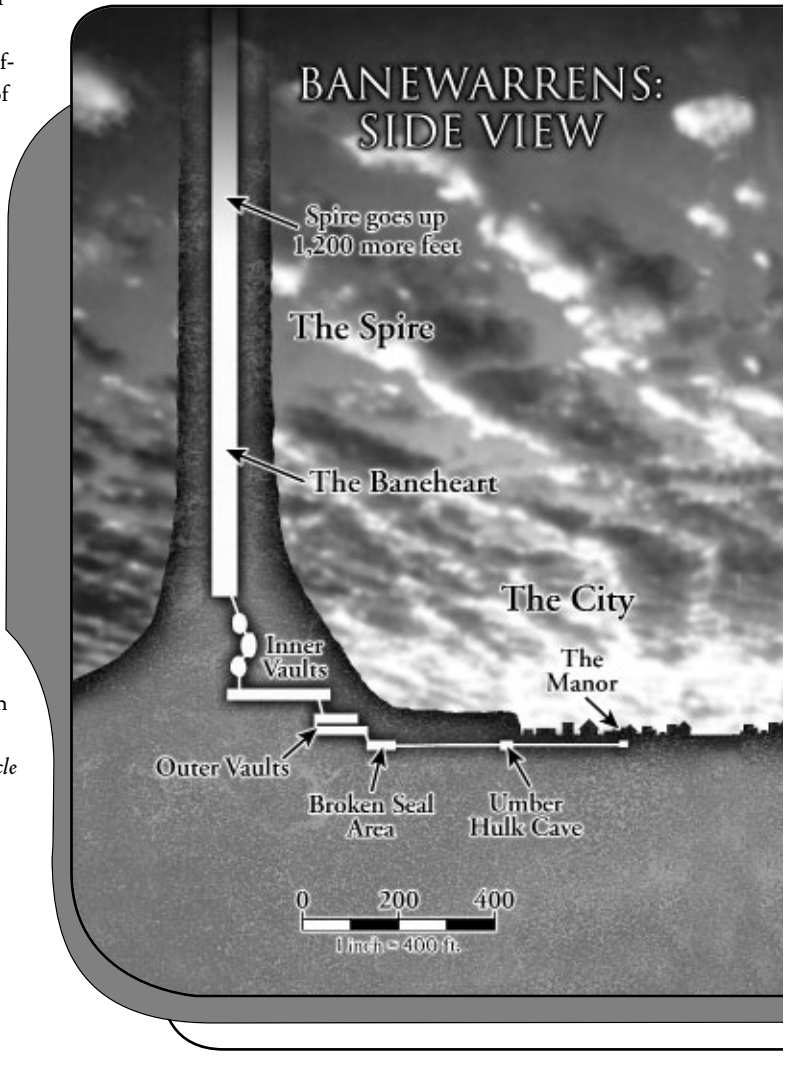
Unless otherwise specified, the ceilings are reinforced and rise 20 feet high, even in hallways.

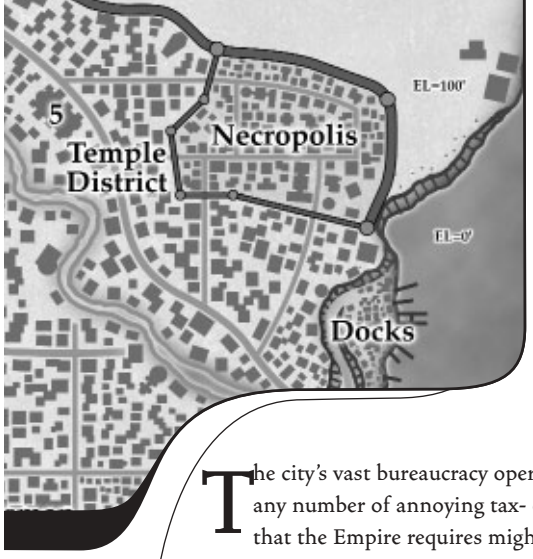
The floors in the Banewarrens are made of heavy slate slabs, most about 5 feet to a side. Practically all of these, however, are cracked, and many are broken, lying at odd angles. The floors of every chamber and hall look and feel uneven. A Balance check (DC 10) is required to run anywhere in the Banewarrens unless otherwise stated.

The ceilings and floors are protected in all ways like the walls.

Random Encounters

There are no random encounters in the Banewarrens. There are, however, events which the DM can insert into the adventure at any point as the PCs explore the various sections. Should the PCs choose to rest in the Banewarrens to heal or regain spells, the other forces exploring the dungeon are sure to interrupt that rest....





It Begins

The action begins while the player characters are in Ptolus on business, or while they are resting after another adventure. An errand has brought them to Oldtown, an area of the city with lots of stately stone buildings, tall columns, and paved (albeit cracked) streets.

The city's vast bureaucracy operates out of Oldtown, so any number of annoying tax- or license-related forms that the Empire requires might bring the PCs to this district in the city.

The streets are busy. All sorts of people from different walks of life bustle about on their own business. As Ptolus is a fairly cosmopolitan city, its streets boast all races and even the occasional surprise—a centaur, some lizardfolk (usually keeping a low profile), or creatures even more exotic. Most people move about on foot. A few ride on horseback or in carriages, but nary a day passes when a bystander doesn't see a knight mounted atop a hippogriff, a wizard with a pseudodragon perched on her shoulder, a cleric accompanied by a living statue made of clay, or something equally strange or frightening.

Still, when the sounds of screams and commotion greet your ears, it clearly alarms everyone around you. Rising over a rooftop, a gout of smoke billows up. Immediately nearby voices begin yelling, "fire!" But then the shouts of alarm cut off as locals scatter in wide-eyed horror. Moments later a screaming half-orc tears into view, engulfed in flame. Somehow, the flames do not actually seem to be burning him. However, when he grabs hold of a burly swordswoman near him in what looks like desperation, the flames do scorch her—badly.

What's Going On?

This event and encounters like it (see below) result from the presence of a single man. Tavan Zith is a thousand-year-old dark elf, imprisoned for most of that time in stasis in the Banewarrens. Tavan was, quite literally, a bane himself, and Danar locked him away to keep his curse from harming others. Due to the events that have opened the formerly sealed warrens (see Chapter Two), Tavan is now free. However, he is completely insane. While he does not possess tremendous personal power, he carries a terrible curse placed upon him by a mighty and unknown creature from another world. Tavan's curse activates latent sorcerous power in others, bringing it to the fore all at once. This usually presents disastrous and dangerous results for the people affected and those around them.

Tavan the madman, once a monk, is now chaotic. In fact, he calls himself an avatar of chaos (which may or may not be true). Freed, he wanders up into the city and along the streets. He wears a long coat of black and gray with a high collar pulled up around his face. Despite his concealing clothing, he does not skulk but strides through the street, as though the people around him were beneath his notice. And as he passes, chaos erupts. Seemingly normal folks, none of whom had ever before displayed magical power, suddenly explode with eldritch might.

When these incidents begin to happen, they happen fast. Use the encounters below as needed, bringing them on fast and furious, and more than one at a time. Most NPCs in the area run from the danger in Tavan's wake. A few try to help, although in so doing they put themselves in danger and make the situation worse rather than better. Even if the PCs are too self-interested to help any of these unfortunates, they witness a bizarre display.

Encounters

The following mini-encounters pop up all around the PCs. These encounters require no map; the entire scene takes place in a crowded urban area, so assume there are lots of buildings and people about. Arrange them as needed to make the encounters work. Most of the situations can be resolved through brute force, but DMs should encourage creative solutions as well.

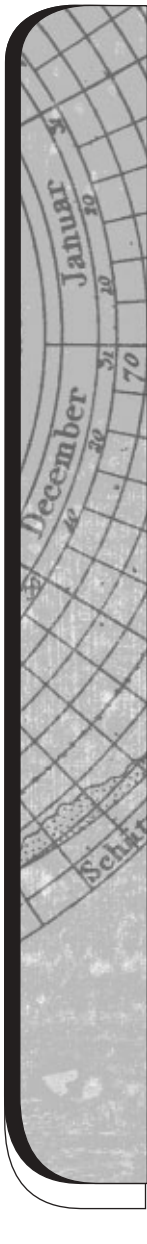
After about 10 rounds the Ptolus city guards show up on foot to help deal with the problems. Six 1st-level warriors and their commander, a 4th-level warrior, compose a typical guard squad.

City Guard, human War1 (6): CR 1; Medium humanoid; HD 1d8+1; hp 9; Init +0; Speed 20 feet; AC 16 (+6 armor); Attack +2 melee (1d8+1 longspear), or +1 ranged (1d8, light crossbow); SV Fort +2, Ref +0, Will +0; AL LN; Str 13, Dex 11, Con 12, Int 10, Wis 11, Cha 9

Skills and Feats: Jump –1, Listen +2, Search +2, Spot +2, Swim +7; Alertness, Combat Reflexes

Possessions: Banded mail, longspear, light crossbow, 12 bolts, dagger, 8 gp, 15 sp

Guard Commander, human War4: CR 3; Medium humanoid; HD 4d8+8; hp 26; Init +7; Speed 20 feet; AC 21 (+1 Dex, +8 armor, +2 shield); Attack +7 melee (1d8+2, longsword),



or +9 ranged (1d8, light crossbow); SV Fort +6, Ref +4, Will +2; AL LN; Str 15, Dex 16, Con 15, Int 9, Wis 12, Cha 11

Skills and Feats: Climb +0, Diplomacy +5, Hide +3, Intimidate +5, Listen +3, Move Silently –3, Spot +3; Alertness, Combat Reflexes, Improved Initiative

Possessions: Masterwork full plate armor, masterwork large steel shield, masterwork longsword, masterwork light crossbow, 12 masterwork bolts, dagger, *potion of cure moderate wounds,* two *potions of cure light wounds*, 13 gp, 54 sp

Torus Pol (EL 5)

Torus Pol is a half-orc down on his luck. He just sold his father's magical battleaxe in order to get some coins to buy food. Without that axe, though, it's unlikely he will get any more work as a mercenary. When his funds run out, he knows he will have to take work as a laborer. He has no idea that he has sorcerous ability, but as described here, the happenstance of proximity with Tavan Zith causes Torus to burst into flame. Torus is immune to the flames, but the cost of producing them drains away 1 point of Dexterity per round (he has already lost 2 points—his original total was 15). Anyone that comes within 5 feet of Torus suffers 2d6 points of fire damage (Reflex save, DC 15 for half damage).

Dealing with the situation: The PCs cannot put out the flames with water (unless Torus is actually submerged, but there are no areas of open water nearby). The flames can be dispelled, as if they were a spell cast by a 5th-level caster. Subduing (or killing) Torus also extinguishes the flames. However, Torus fights back if attacked.

Torus Pol, male half-orc War5: CR 4; Medium humanoid; HD 5d8; hp 36; Init +1; Speed 30 feet; AC 19 (+1 Dex, +6 armor, +2 shield); Attack +8 melee (1d4+3, dagger), or +6 ranged (1d4+3, dagger); SV Fort +4, Ref +2, Will +2; AL N; Str 16, Dex 13, Con 11, Int 8, Wis 13, Cha 12

Skills and Feats: Hide –3, Intimidate +9, Listen +1, Move Silently –3, Spot +1; Improved Unarmed Strike, Weapon Focus (battleaxe)

Possessions: +1 breastplate, masterwork large steel shield, two daggers, 1,155 gp, 3 sp

What happens if the PCs don't intervene? A neutral good 6th-level human sorcerer named Silas Radom uses a *dispel magic* spell to cope with Torus' plight, but not before the flames harm five bystanders, three of whom almost die before others manage to stabilize them. One other bystander is killed.

Richaul Kevenaugh (EL 2)

A draftsman with the official city architect's guild, Richaul Kevenaugh is a widower in Oldtown picking up a skirt he had a seamstress mend for his daughter. He is in his forties, quiet, and reserved. When Tavan Zith comes near, however, Richaul's latent sorcerous abilities come to the fore, and he begins blasting energy from his eyes like bolts of blue lightning. He has no control over these blasts, each round firing one out to 60 feet in a random direction. The bolts each inflict 4d6 points of

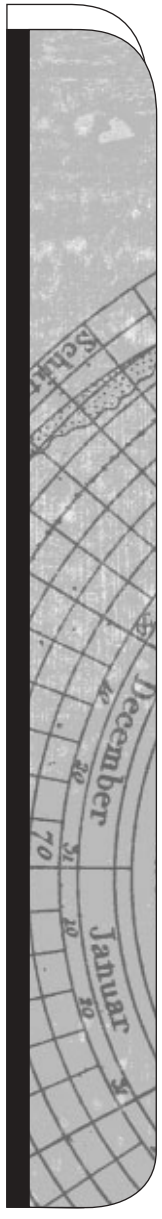
Latent Sorcery

The idea that just about anyone can take sorcerer levels as a multiclass implies that a lot of people carry the inherent magic required to be a sorcerer. Tavan Zith's special power brings that latent power to the fore, activating it against the person's will and beyond the subject's control.

Anyone that comes within 30 feet of Tavan Zith must make a Will save. The DC is equal to 10 + half the victim's own level + his Charisma modifier, because it is actually the character's own power working against him here. If a character fails the saving throw, roll on the table below or choose an effect (or make up your own—the rod of wonder *in the DMG offers additional ideas). Characters who make the save prove immune to Tavan Zith's curse forever. (This may mean they have no latent sorcerous talent—that is up to the DM.)*

An afflicted character is not in control of the following powers or afflictions. Events described occur on the character's turn as free actions.

d%	Effect
01–15	*The character's body begins secreting acid that inflicts 1d6 points of damage per round of contact on anyone she touches, as well as on all her possessions. This effect lasts until dispelled or until the character is immersed in water.*
16–25	*The character begins to make 5-foot-wide, 5-foot-long, and 10-foot-deep pits open in the ground immediately in front of himself. A new pit appears every 1d3 rounds, and anyone in that area (including the character if he moves that round) must succeed at a Reflex save (DC 20) or fall in. This effect lasts while the character remains conscious.*
26–40	*A cloud of reddish poison gas with a 5-foot radius surrounds the character, moving with him. The cloud inflicts 1d4 points of temporary Strength damage to anyone who enters it (including the PC) and the same damage again one minute later, unless they succeed at a Fortitude save (DC 10 + half the character's level + his Constitution bonus).*
41–55	*The character continually emits a shower of sparkling powder from her flesh, out to a range of 10 feet. All within this area must make a successful Fortitude save or become blind for 1d4 rounds (DC 10 + half the character's level + her Charisma bonus). This powder also gathers upon invisible objects, revealing their location. The effect lasts until dispelled or until the character falls unconscious.*
56–70	*All unlocked doors, windows, backpacks, belt pouches, or other sealable containers or entrances within 30 feet of the character pop open on his turn. This effect lasts for one hour or until dispelled.*
71–80	*The character grows one size category, gaining modifications as outlined in the MM. His equipment and armor does not grow (he likely bursts all his buckles and rips free of his clothes). This effect lasts for one hour or until dispelled.*
81–90	*The character glows brightly, as if light were cast upon her. This effect lasts for one hour or until dispelled.*
91–00	*The character's skin turns to a tough, fibrous material that grants a +2 natural armor bonus to AC for one hour.*



electrical damage (Reflex save [DC 14] halves) to all in a 5-foot line stretching to the end of his range.

Dealing with the situation: The strange magical effect Richaul produces cannot be dispelled. However, it does not function in an area of magical darkness. It also ends if he falls unconscious (or dies).

Richaul Kevenaugh, male human Exp2: CR 1; Medium humanoid; HD 2d6+2; hp 13; Init +3; Speed 30 feet; AC 13 (+3 Dex); Attack –2 melee, or +4 ranged; SV Fort +1, Ref +3, Will +6; AL NG; Str 4, Dex 16, Con 13, Int 15, Wis 13, Cha 14

Skills and Feats: Diplomacy +7, Disable Device +5, Gather Information +7, Innuendo +6, Knowledge (architecture and engineering) +7, Listen +6, Profession (architect) +9, Ride +5, Spot +6, Use Rope +4; Iron Will, Skill Focus (profession)

Possessions: 750 gp emerald ring, 98 gp, 23 sp

What happens if the PCs don't intervene? The city guards kill Richaul with crossbows, but only after he has slain six people and wounded 12 others.

Shin Bastal (EL 1)

Shin Bastal is a human woman (Com1) who sells baked goods from a wooden cart that she rolls up and down the streets of this district. Away from the marketplace, she does a fair trade. Shin is in her fifties and walks with a slight stoop. She's never had any interests beyond simply selling her wares and earning money for herself and her ailing son. When Shin begins to float up into the air, she never for a moment thinks the effect emanates from within her. She *levitates* up 10 feet per round until she is 30 feet above the street. When this effect begins, she starts to scream, yelling that demons have her in their grasp.

Dealing with the situation: Shin is in no real danger, but the PCs don't know that. She just needs someone to pull her down to the ground. Using *dispel magic* would be dangerous, because it would make her fall.

Shin Bastal, female human Com1: CR 1; Medium humanoid; HD 1d4; hp 6; Init +0; Speed 30 feet; AC 10; Attack –2 melee, or +0 ranged; SV Fort +2, Ref +0, Will –1; AL CG; Str 6, Dex 10, Con 10, Int 12, Wis 9, Cha 5

Skills and Feats: Balance +2, Listen +2, Profession (baker) +3, Spot +1; Great Fortitude, Toughness

Possessions: Baked goods, pushcart, 39 sp, 42 cp

What happens if the PCs don't intervene? A few helpful people get a rope and toss it up to Shin, pulling her down, where she eventually manages to remain (they have to hold her down for a minute or two).

Rinner Silverfind (EL 7)

Like many dwarves, Rinner Silverfind hates magic. He distrusts it and the strange things it allows people to do. Rinner is tall for a dwarf and muscular, with a braided blond beard. He works for a foundry in the Guildsman District and has come to Oldtown to meet with a comrade. He does not make it to the meeting, however, before he inadvertently begins magically calling monsters. He cannot control these conjured beasts with his erratic magic. And since they are called, they do not simply go away if slain, and they can't be dispelled. When the PCs first come upon Rinner, they see him gaping in disgust and horror as a dying fiendish octopus, half formed within the wall of a building, flails its tentacles about. Then, suddenly, a shadow mastiff appears and begins attacking random targets. (A Spellcraft check [DC 18] allows a PC to determine that Rinner called it, otherwise, the group has no idea.) Its bay attack (300-foot spread) is monstrously effective in this city, panicking an already panicked neighborhood. It cannot use its shadow blend power, however, due to the daylight conditions.

Dealing with the situation: If no one stops him, in 1d4 rounds Rinner calls a formian worker which doesn't seek to harm anyone or do much of anything. Then, 1d4 rounds after that, the dwarf calls an imp. Rinner knows that he is calling these creatures, but he cannot stop. What's worse, Rinner already summoned another imp inadvertently a few rounds earlier. It floats invisibly at his shoulder. If the imp sees the PCs attempting to deal with the situation, it uses its *suggestion* ability on Rinner, with the *suggestion*, "You should protect the creatures you call." Eventually, if allowed, Rinner runs away.

Rinner needs to be stopped. Other than knocking him out or killing him, there is a way: PCs nearby who succeed at Spellcraft checks (DC 18) see the dwarf wiggle his fingers in a spasm the moment before a new creature appears. Binding his hands stops the summoning. If Rinner remains bound for a full minute, the power passes, and he can control himself once again.

Rinner Silverfind, male dwarf (hill) Ftr4: CR 4; Medium humanoid; HD 4d10+4; hp 31; Init +2; Speed 20 feet; AC 12 (+2 Dex); Attack +6 melee, or +6 ranged; SV Fort +5, Ref +5, Will +3; AL LN; Str 15, Dex 14, Con 13, Int 10, Wis 14, Cha 12

Skills and Feats: Appraise +2, Craft +4, Hide +2, Listen +2, Move Silently +2, Ride +5, Spellcraft +2, Spot +2, Swim +8; Combat Reflexes, Dodge, Lightning Reflexes, Weapon Focus (greataxe), Weapon Specialization (greataxe)

Possessions: +1 plate armor, masterwork greataxe, *potion of levitate*, 100 gp silver bracers, 31 gp

Shadow Mastiff: hp 30, AC 14, +7 bite (1d6+4), bay spreads fear (DC 13), trip, scent, blends into shadows; see MM, page 162

Imp (1 or 2): hp 13 each, AC 18, +8 sting (1d4 plus poison), spell-like abilities, regeneration 2, SR 5, DR 5/silver; see MM, page 48

What happens if the PCs don't intervene? Rinner runs off, with two invisible imps attempting to control his actions. The city is plagued by the strange and sudden appearances of monsters until Rinner finally gets control of his power. However, he has bouts in which he loses control again for an hour or so at a time, so the city is never really safe unless someone does something about him. (At that point, he'll have to be confined and bound for at least a week to break him from the magical effect; his power has become too advanced to suppress by binding his hands for only a minute or two.)

Potentially, Rinner and his problem could come back to haunt the PCs later in the game, when they return to the city. The PCs will remember him, and maybe he even comes to them for help. In any event, his conjuration powers can provide more surprising "monster in the city" encounters; the DM should pick creatures appropriate to the PCs' levels.

Tabaen Farsong (EL 3)

A minor elf noble from the forests to the north, Tabaen Farsong comes from a long line of sorcerers, but he never had an interest in magic. Why would he, when there were so many elegant wines to drink, ladies to charm, and games of chance to play? Too busy attending parties to ever worry about sorcery, Tabaen is in Oldtown to pay a fine for public drunkenness (probably along with a bribe to keep everything discreet).

Tabaen's latent sorcerous powers manifest as divinatory revelations. Images of things happening, or that have happened, or that will happen fill his mind. But it all hits him so rapidly, he can't stand it. He just learns too much too fast. Screaming in horror and pain, Tabaen drops to his knees in the middle of the street.

Dealing with the situation: A *dispel magic* spell puts a stop to Tabaen's malady, as does rendering him unconscious; unfortunately, like all elves, he is immune to *sleep*. If the characters attempt to subdue him, he's likely to misunderstand and fight back with his rapier, but at a –4 circumstance penalty to attacks (and saves and checks) due to the pain of his brain overload.

Tabaen Farsong, male elf Ari3: CR 2; Medium humanoid; HD 3d8; hp 18; Init +4; Speed 30 feet; AC 14 (+4 Dex); Attack +2 melee, or +6 ranged; SV Fort +1, Ref +5, Will +5; AL N; Str 11, Dex 18, Con 11, Int 14, Wis 15, Cha 17

Skills and Feats: Disguise +9, Diplomacy +11, Hide +4, Knowledge (Nobility and Royalty) +4, Knowledge (History) +7, Knowledge (Local) +4, Listen +6, Move Silently +4, Search +4, Sense Motive +8, Speak Language (Draconic, Gnome, Goblin, Halfling, Sylvan), Spot +11; Alertness, Skill Focus (Diplomacy)

Possessions: Masterwork rapier with jeweled hilt (worth 1,000 gp total), 100 gp silver ring, 120 gp

What happens if the PCs don't intervene? Tabaen goes insane and is taken to Mahdoth's Asylum in Midtown (a prisonlike institution for insane arcanists). He shows up again later if need be; see Chapter Three.

Handling Tavan Zith (EL 8)

Each time the PCs come upon one of the above encounters, let each character make a Spot check (DC 18). Success means they notice the strange, dark figure walking down the street, oblivious to the situation. They may not act on this the first time they see him, but the second time they see Tavan Zith they are sure to confront him.

Coming within 30 feet of Tavan is dangerous unless the character is a wizard, sorcerer, or bard. Because arcanists already have the knowledge to master magical power, Tavan's curse has no affect on them. Other characters must make a Will saving throw or become affected by their own latent sorcerous ability (see "Latent Sorcery" sidebar). If Tavan is killed or knocked unconscious, his curse stops functioning. If he revives, the curse recurs—it cannot be removed by anything less than the direct intervention of a god.

Tavan brooks no interference, although he actually has no specific plans—he just wants to get away from the entrance to the Banewarrens. He shows no compassion for the woe he brings, proclaiming himself an avatar of chaos. He fights anyone who bothers him just long enough to get away. Tavan is too insane to give the PCs any reliable information. Even using *detect thoughts* doesn't help: Tavan believes he has been loosed on the world by the gods of chaos to spread madness.

Tavan Zith, male elf (dark elf) Ex-Mnk7: CR 8; Medium humanoid; HD 7d8; hp 36; Init +5; Speed 50 feet; AC 20 (+5 Dex, +4 Wis, +1 Mnk); Attack +6/+3 (1d8+1, unarmed attack), or +10 ranged; SA *Dancing lights, darkness, faerie fire* 1x/day; SQ SR 18; SV Fort +8, Ref +13, Will +12; AL CE; Str 13, Dex 20, Con 10, Int 15, Wis 19, Cha 10

Skills and Feats: Craft +9, Diplomacy +8, Hide +13, Listen +12, Move Silently +15, Profession +13, Search +8, Spot +6, Swim +8; Ambidexterity, Blind-Fight, Deflect Arrows, Dodge, Improved Trip, Improved Unarmed Strike, Stunning Fist

Possessions: *+3 cloak of resistance*

The Aftermath

Eventually, Tavan Zith either leaves or falls. Regardless, things do calm down. However, word of the strange incidents quickly spread through the city. If the PCs helped out in the crisis, they receive the thanks of the victims (the ones who are still alive), the bystanders, and the guards who show up. It's likely that, if desired, the group could spend the rest of the day with locals buying them drinks and dinner, singing loudly of their heroism and exploits.

If the PCs use Gather Information checks or other mundane means to inquire about what was really going on or where Tavan Zith came from, they have no success—simply because no one knows (besides the Inverted Pyramid; see "The First Inquiry"). Spells at their disposal likely won't help much, either. They just do not have enough to go on. But they don't have to wait long for things to develop further.

Experience Awards

Due to the extenuating circumstances of the newly emergent powers, award experience for each encounter as if the characters' or creatures' CRs were 1 point higher than normal (except for Shin Bastal and Tavan himself, whose CRs stand as listed). Award this bonus no matter how the PCs deal with the situation, as long as they successfully stop the latent sorcerers.

The First Inquiry

Within a few hours, Jevicca Norr tracks down the player characters, using Gather Information and spells if she has to. This powerful (15th-level) wizard represents the Inverted Pyramid. Jevicca is tall and stately, with a magically animate arm made of red glass (she never reveals how she lost her arm or what else the glass prosthetic can do). Her hair is long and red, and she always wears green and carries a thin, crooked staff. After introducing herself, she commends the PCs on their heroism and skill (if appropriate). In asking a few detailed questions about what happened, she shows that she actually already knows what happened. She tells them that she understands a little about what was going on; she'll fill them in if they will hear an offer her organization has empowered her to make.

If they seem willing to listen, she gives the PCs the background on the Banewarrens (see the Introduction). She then explains that the warrens have opened somehow—she does not know how, when, or any more than that, however. Her organization, steeped in ancient lore, knows the terrors that the Banewarrens contains and wants to find someone to help investigate and, if possible, seal the place up again. (If asked, she tells the PCs that the Inverted Pyramid is indeed sending other investigators on this same mission, although she herself has other duties.) The Inverted Pyramid will pay each player character 850 gp for recovering substantial information regarding the opening (and resealing) of the Banewarrens.

If the PCs agree, she gives them each 150 gp up front as an advance to buy supplies, then tells them that, according to various divinatory spells her organization has used, Tavan Zith entered the city by coming up through the wine cellar of a manor in Oldtown. She can give them detailed directions. The house is currently vacant. Lastly, she tells the group how to contact her when they have some information—they can leave word for her at a public house called the Ghostly Minstrel.

If the PCs decline, she looks disappointed but tells them she understands. She does not reveal the location of the entrance to the Banewarrens.

The Second Inquiry

Whether the PCs accept or turn down Jevicca's offer, they are approached soon afterward by Brother Fabitor Thisk of the Church of Lothian (who has also used mundane and perhaps magical means to find them). Fabitor, a 7th-level cleric, is in his forties and appears fairly fit. He has a light brown beard and carries no weapons. Like Jevicca, he asks questions about what happened on the street earlier, but his questions seem quite general—he doesn't know nearly as much about the event as Jevicca. When and if the PCs impress him as fairly capable individuals, he presents them with his own offer. He explains that a great champion important to the church has gone missing. The paladin's name is Kalerecent and he disappeared just a few days ago. He was last seen at Brother Fabitor's small church in midtown (the chapel of St. Gustov).

He doesn't know anything about the Banewarrens, or even that that's where Kalerecent is located. All he knows is that the paladin is missing, and divinations point to his involvement somehow with the incident earlier that day. He offers them (as a group) a reward of 2,000 gp, payable when they return Kalerecent to the church alive. He will pay 1,000 gp for the recovery of his body for raising.

Relocating the Banewarrens

Ptolus, the default setting for this adventure, is built atop a portion of the Banewarrens. DMs who set the location of the underground complex elsewhere will have to alter the information the PCs get about its location. They also will have to explain how Tavan Zith got into the city from the Banewarrens' revised location.

Fabitor does not know that Jevicca also made the group an offer. The PCs, of course, are free to accept both offers: At this point, they do not appear to conflict at all.

If the player characters turn down both offers, the DM should use some other means to get them involved. Perhaps, if the PCs are motivated by greed or curiosity, after learning what Jevicca and Fabitor say, they will wish to explore the Banewarrens on their own.

The Meandering Passage

The Pactlords of the Quaan used research as well as legend lore *and other divinations to learn of a weak spot in the Banewarrens' protective seal. In their quest to obtain the* Black Grail *from within the ancient structure, they brought in an umber hulk to dig down to the area they had divined. First it attempted to dig to the location from outside the city, but failed. They discovered that the easiest way to access the weak spot was from within Ptolus, the most geologically stable portion of the surrounding landscape.*

So the Pactlords took over a small manor house in Oldtown, snuck in their umber hulk ally invisibly, and put the beast to work on the tunnel.

The Manor House

The house is empty, and has been for a long time. Not surprisingly, some of the local children (and perhaps a few adults) believe the place to be haunted—although that's not true. The house is encircled by a courtyard filled with overgrown vegetation and surrounded by a low stone wall. The high windows combined with the tall foundation elevating the main floor make it easy to look out of the place but difficult to look in. The door is unlocked (a Search check [DC 23] suggests the lock has been picked).

The two-story stone house has a dozen rooms, most of them bedrooms. Others include an entry hall, a library, a large dining hall, a sitting room with a fireplace, and, of course, a kitchen with an ample pantry. Most of the rooms are empty of furnishings.

The Sentry

The Pactlords left an orc fighter named Kularas in the house to keep away prying eyes. She does not hesitate to kill intruders, but if clearly outmatched she tries to run. Her *potion of invisibility* most likely helps her escape. If she does get away, she sneaks to the Belfry (see Chapter Six).

If intruders enter the house, Kularas leaps out in ambush once they are inside, fighting in the 20-foot-by-30-foot entry hall.

Kularas, Female Orc Ftr5: CR 5; Medium humanoid; HD 5d10+5; hp 31; Init +2 (+2 Dex); Speed 30 feet; AC 20 (+1 Dex, +9 armor); Attack +12 melee (2d6+7, greatsword); SV Fort +5, Ref +3, Will +1; AL CE; Str 20, Dex 14, Con 12, Int 11, Wis 7, Cha 11

Skills and Feats: Climb +12, Handle Animal +6, Listen +1, Spot +1; Alertness, Blind-Fight, Iron Will, Weapon Focus (greatsword), Weapon Specialization (greatsword)

Possessions: *+1 greatsword, +1 plate armor, bone Quaan ring, potions of bull's strength, cure serious wounds,* and *invisibility* (all clearly labeled)

The Wine Cellar

Stone stairs in the kitchen's pantry lead down to a wine cellar. Wooden racks for bottles, and a few larger ones for casks, fill the room. All the racks are empty. A number of them have toppled over and some have been piled atop one another to clear space. A hole in the western wall is clearly visible. Stone debris lies scattered around the breach.

From the wine cellar, through the hole, a long tunnel leads west underneath much of the city to a spot below the edge of the Spire itself. This tunnel, surprisingly, looks new. A Craft (stoneworking) check with a DC of 15 reveals that claws made the tunnel; a result of 25 or more indicates umber hulk claws. It runs just under a quarter of a mile, and ranges from 6 to 10 feet wide and high. Due to the skill of umber hulk burrowing, no supports or braces are needed to prevent a cave-in. To avoid unstable areas, however, the passage winds and meanders a bit.

Quaan Rings

The fact that Kularas wears a bone ring is significant. This bone ring is magical and cannot be removed unless the wearer is dead (it grafts itself to the bone). It is called a Quaan ring, *because anyone at the Fountain of the Pact in the Quaan (see Chapter Seven) can concentrate and know the location of anyone wearing one of these rings (assuming that the wearer's name is known). Virtually all Pactlords of the Quaan and their servants wear these rings.*

Caster Level: *5;* Prerequisites: *Forge Ring,* locate creature, *creator must be a part of the Pact of Quaan;* Market Price: *worthless;* Cost to Create: *10,000 gp and 800 XP*

The Umber Hulk Lair

After about 600 feet, the passage splits to the north and the west. To the west lies the Banewarrens, but to the north the PCs will find the lair of the umber hulk that dug the passage. This area looks quite freshly dug.

The Pactlords of the Quaan allowed the umber hulk to remain here. From its point of view, this new lair is an interesting place with a large food supply nearby (the city). From the Pactlords' point of view, the umber hulk should kill anyone that comes by to interfere with them.

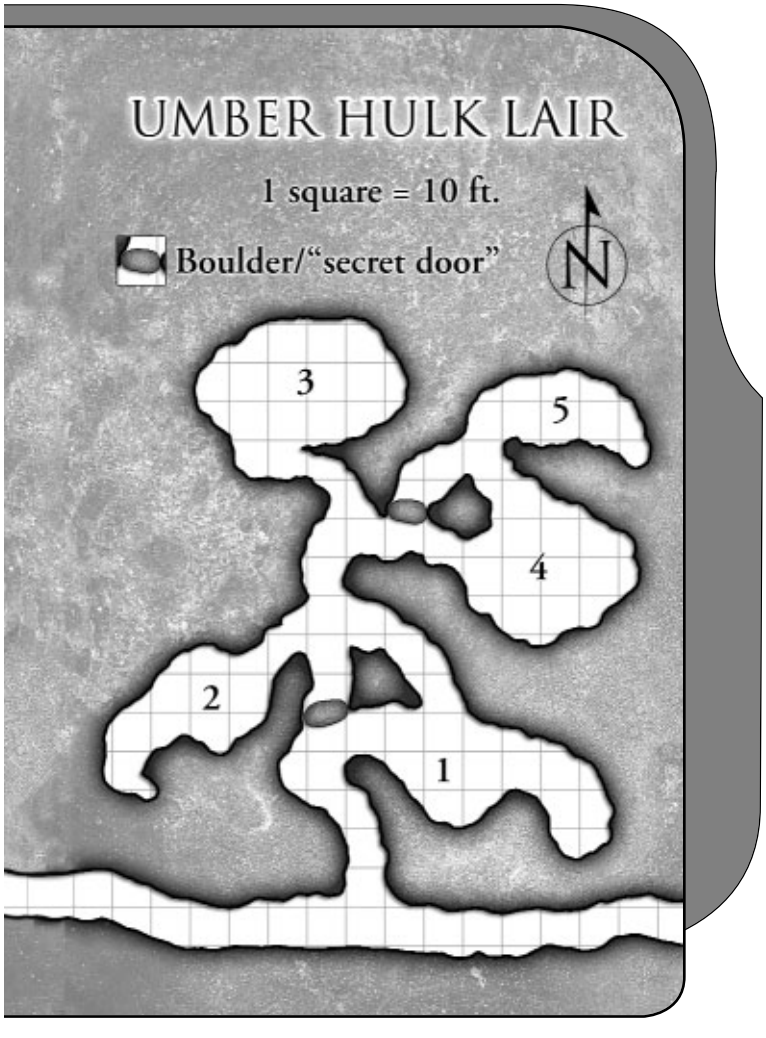
1. Trap (EL 4)

A freshly dug, burrowlike cave, this area has a lot of loose rocks and dirt on the floor. Its walls are smooth. Everything appears slightly damp.

The umber hulk has used its burrowing ability to create a trap here. The westernmost passage to the north is blocked and hidden by a boulder, which serves as a secret door (Search, DC 18), allowing the creature to bypass the trap.

The trap consists of a pit filled with jagged rocks on the sides and the bottom. The pit is covered with loose rocks not capable of supporting more than about 100 lbs. If more weight than that steps onto the floor in Area 1, anyone in the room must make a Reflex save (DC 20) or fall. The pit is 30 feet deep, and the jagged rocks inflict an additional 1d6 points of damage (4d6 total).

Pit: CR 4; 30 feet deep and jagged rocks (3d6+1d6); Reflex save (DC 20) avoids; Search (DC 18); Disable Device (DC 30)



2. An Unwelcome Visitor (EL 5)

The walls of this cavern rise about 10 feet from the floor, although the ceiling looks slightly domed. Every surface is wet with the greasy residue of mineral-choked water. Cracks in the walls reveal the moisture slowly seeping in, mostly along the north wall.

An ochre jelly has wandered into this area, drawn through a natural fissure that leads up and to the north (the creature is only a few inches wide) to feed on the umber hulk's scraps and waste. The umber hulk has not yet come upon it. This ooze attacks anything smaller than itself that comes close.

Anyone entering the room must make a Spot check (DC 15) to see the ochre jelly. If no one spots it, this ooze attacks with surprise.

Ochre Jelly: hp 59, AC 4, +5 slam (2d4+3 + 1d4 acid), improved grab, constrict (2d4+3 + 1d4 acid), blindsight, ooze qualities, weapons and electricity split it; see MM, page 180

3. Storage Cave

A horrible stench comes from this cave to the north. The ceiling is low—only about 8 feet high—and the walls are slick with moisture. Within, the center of the floor in this dead-end cavern has a low spot. About 2 feet lower than the rest of the cave, it holds a grisly, bloody mess: some half-devoured humanoid creature, greenish white from bloating and decay.

The umber hulk uses this cave to store food for later. At the moment, the cave contains a half-eaten victim grabbed from the city above. A character searching the body (DC 17) comes upon the victim's coin purse hidden within his tattered cloak. It contains 14 gp and 81 sp.

4. Another Trap

Damp stone walls and a loose, gravely floor do little to distinguish this burrow from other similar chambers.

This simple-looking cave is trapped so that any overt disturbing of the loose rocks on the ground triggers a rockfall from above. Each character entering this room and placing at least 50 lbs. of weight upon the floor must make a DC 15 Balance check. Failure sets off the trap. Each round spent in the cave forces another check.

Rockfall: CR 4; jagged rocks fall throughout the entire chamber (4d6); Reflex save (DC 16) halves; Search (DC 20); Disable Device (DC 24)

5. The Den (EL 7)

This cavern is large and full of loose rock. Some of the stones have been arranged to make a sort of bed for a very large creature. Others appear to have been shaped, but their purpose remains a mystery. Could it be some strange art?

The bed is indeed a bed, and the shaped rocks are indeed the creature's attempt at art.

Creature

The umber hulk has created this cave for itself. The PCs most likely will encounter it here unless they make undue noise elsewhere in the caverns (allow the umber hulk to make a Listen check with its +11 bonus each time the PCs move from cave to cave). If it hears intruders it moves to investigate. It attacks immediately if it sees foes/prey, always using the secret passages it has tunneled.

Umber Hulk: hp 70, AC 17, +11 claws (2d4+6, two attacks) and +9 bite (2d8+3), confusion gaze (DC 15), tremorsense; see MM, page 180

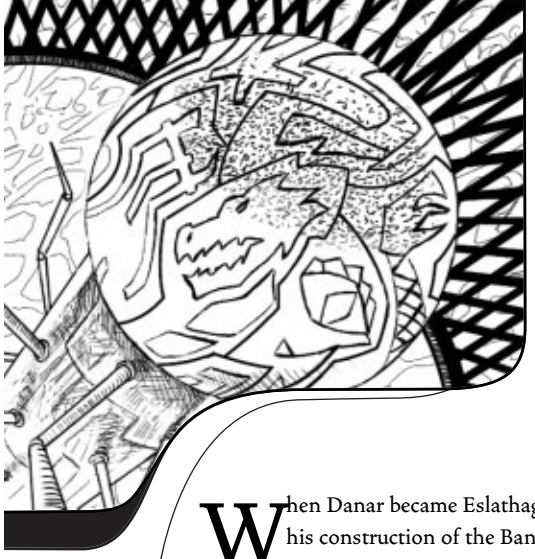
Treasure

Hidden behind a rock in the northeast corner of the cave (Search, DC 20 to find), the umber hulk has stashed its payment from the Pactlords, as well as some other trinkets it's collected.

The creature's stash includes the following items: 230 gp, 492 sp, three gold-and-silver necklaces worth 100 gp each, a small silver picture frame worth 250 gp, a ring with a small black pearl worth 500 gp, and a jeweled gold cup worth 1,000 gp.

Entrance to the Banewarrens

The meandering passage finally ends west of the umber hulk's lair in the place where the creature broke through a wall into an outer section of the Banewarrens. See Chapter Three for more details on these initial vaults.



The Broken Seal

The area described in this chapter is by no means the main entrance into the Banewarrens. In fact, the only real "entrance" is from above, in the fortress atop the Spire: Jabel Shammar. The section detailed here originally served as a minor vault area located on the very edge of the Banewarrens' bottommost layer. It was the last section to be built.

When Danar became Eslathagos Malkith, he stopped his construction of the Banewarrens; thus he never shored up this area with the proper wards and materials to keep it proof from intrusion. The Pactlords discovered this, the weak spot in the Banewarrens, and recruited an umber hulk to dig to it.

Event: The Grailquest Team Returns (EL 8)

The "Grailquest Team" is what the Pactlords of the Quaan call their initial strike force, sent in to penetrate the Banewarrens and get the *Black Grail*. Because the Pactlords always prepare themselves for various contingencies, they have a "Grailquest Team 2" waiting if the first should fail.

When the player characters show up, the team is not present in the area around the Broken Seal. The Pactlords arrived a little while before the PCs did (shortly before the characters encountered Tavan Zith in Chapter One). However, the Grailquest Team was followed by Kalerecent, paladin of Lothian, and his cohort. They stopped all but one of the Pactlords from getting into the Banewarrens via the Sealed Door (Area 7). After this defeat, the surviving members of the team retreated (with the exception of the lamia Derimach, who remains in Area 11). Nevertheless, at some point while the PCs are in the areas this chapter describes, the rest of the Grailquest Team returns to explore, hoping to find some other way to open the Sealed Door.

This is probably this chapter's most challenging encounter. The members of the Grailquest Team act intelligently; although they lack their proper leader, they nonetheless are used to working together.

Tactics

With Kikanuile the green hag trapped beyond the Sealed Door, another lamia, Verochin, now leads this team. His tactics are straightforward—he and his minotaur companion Ios charge into melee, and their goblin comrades hang back to fire arrows after Verochin uses his *mirror image* power and Ios drinks his *potion of haste*. Verochin uses his Wisdom drain touch attack with his unarmed attacks. He particularly enjoys attacking clerics this way. He does not hesitate to use his stunning attack (DC 13), particularly on a spellcaster. Once *hasted*, Ios wreaks havoc with his sword and horns, utterly fearless.

Verochin, male lamia Mnk1: CR 7; Medium magical beast; HD 9d10+9 + 1d8+1; hp 64; Init +3; Speed 60 feet; AC 23 (+2 Dex, +3 Wis, +5 natural, +2 bracers, +1 ring); Attack +11/+6 melee (1d6+1, unarmed attack); SA Wisdom drain, spell-like abilities 1x/day—*charm person, major image, mirror image*, and *suggestion*; SQ Evasion; SV Fort +9, Ref +10, Will +9; AL CE; Str 12, Dex 14, Con 13, Int 12, Wis 16, Cha 13

Skills and Feats: Bluff +13, Concentration +11, Hide +15, Move Silently +8; Dodge, Improved Unarmed Strike, Iron Will, Mobility, Stunning Fists, Weapon Finesse (unarmed strikes)

Possessions: *+2 bracers of armor, +1 ring of protection, bone Quaan ring, potions of bull's strength, wisdom, cure serious wounds,* and *cure moderate wounds*

Ios, male minotaur War1: CR 4; Large monstrous humanoid; HD 6d8+18 + 1d8+3; hp 61; Init +1; Speed 30 feet; AC 15 (+1 Dex, –1 size, +5 natural); Attack +15/+10 melee (2d8+11, huge greatsword) and +8 melee (1d8+3 gore); SA Charge (4d6+6 damage); SQ Scent; SV Fort +7, Ref +6, Will +6; AL NE; Str 24, Dex 12, Con 17, Int 6, Wis 12, Cha 13

Skills and Feats: Intimidate +7, Jump +11, Listen +11, Search +6, Spot +9; Power Attack, Weapon Focus (greatsword)

Possessions: *+1 huge greatsword*, *bone Quaan ring*, *potions of haste* and *cure moderate wounds*

Goblins (4)**:** hp 3, 4, 6, 7, AC 17; +1 short sword (1d6–1) or +3 shortbow (1d6). These goblins have the Point Blank Shot feat rather than Alertness. See MM, page 107.

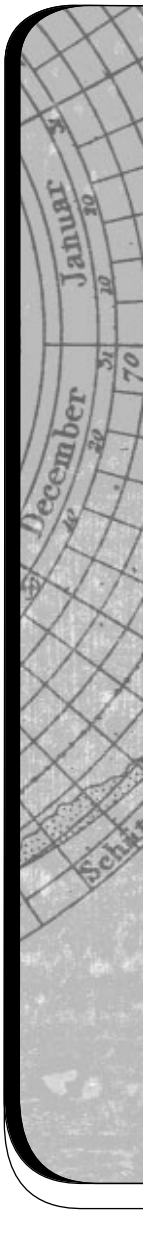
Possessions: Short sword, studded leather armor, large wooden shield, shortbow, 12 arrows, 2 sp

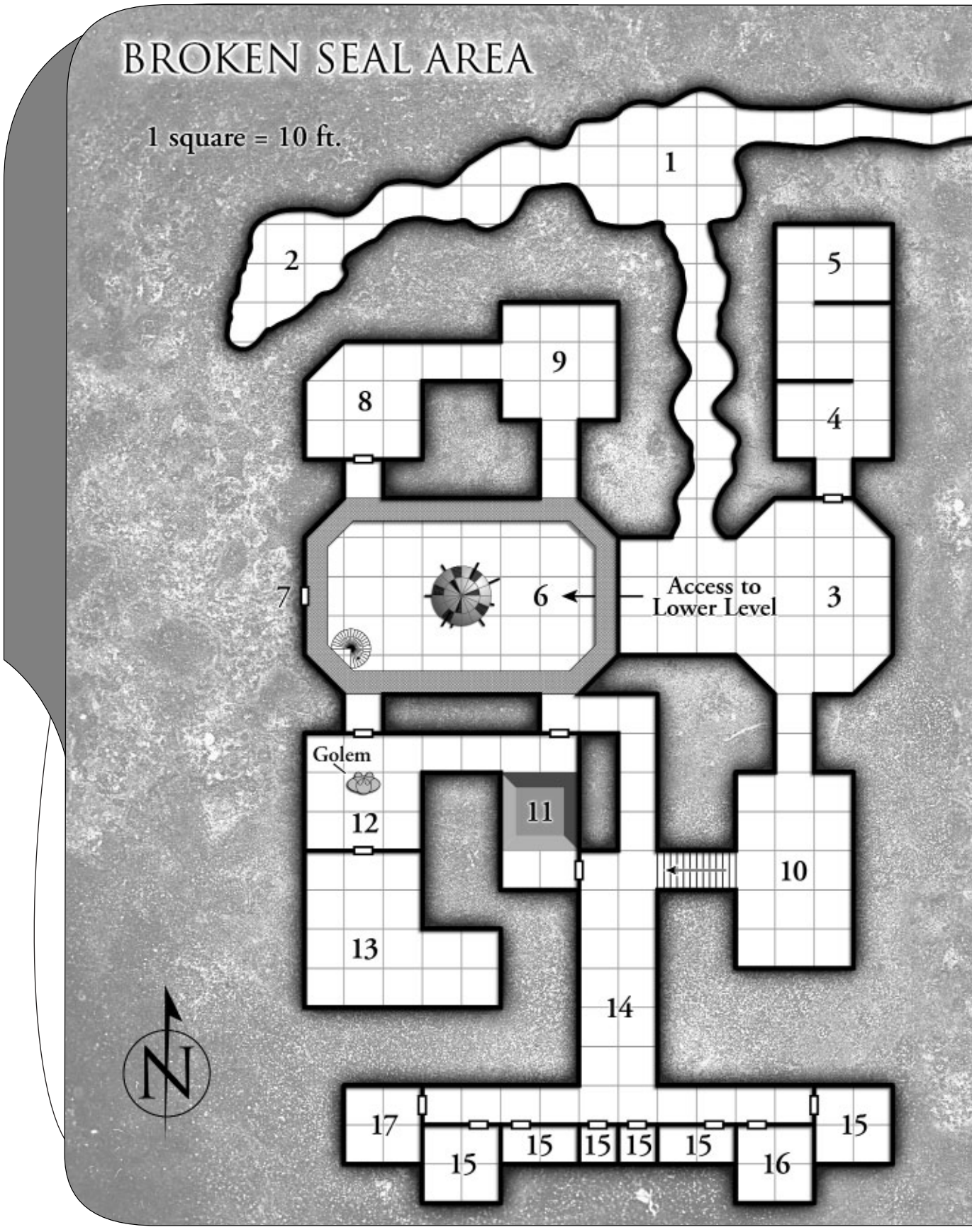
The Broken Seal Area

Refer to "Banewarrens Specifics" in the Introduction for information on the general setting here. Remember that the floor is cracked and broken—as are the walls, to some degree—yet the place remains relatively stable.

1. Burrowed Cavern

The tunnel widens into a cavern here. Loose stones and dirt cover the floor. Burrowed passages lead to the west, south, and east. This cavern is about three quarters of a mile from where the meandering passage started in the manor house's cellar.




BROKEN SEAL AREA
1 square = 10 ft.
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Access to Lower Level
Golem
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A leather bag meant for a large creature to bear lies on the floor next to a few scattered digging tools. None of the tools appears to have been used.

The bag and the tools were brought here by Ios, a Pactlord minotaur. The bag contains a lot of food (mostly meat) wrapped in cloth, a lantern, two extra flasks of lamp oil, two flasks of acid, a very large waterskin, and a handwritten note in a strange scrawl. It reads:

Kikanuile,
Once you get inside the unsealed portion of the Banewarrens, you will have to find a massive iron door. This is a warded door. It may be trapped, we do not know. It is, however, sealed beyond your capacity to breach. Therefore, you will use a wish *from the ring to open it—and even that will keep it open only for a moment. On what lies beyond that door, our spells are silent, except that you will find the* Grail *within Tremoc Korin. The last* wish *will be your key to get out.*
— Yuinthu

The tools are Large picks and a shovel, for use if problems arose with the umber hulk. (They did not, but the Pactlords are always ready for things to go wrong.)

2. Dead-End Tunnel

The tunnel suddenly ends, as if whatever was digging it simply stopped.

The umber hulk missed the entry into the Banewarrens at first, and had to go back and try again.

3. Octagon Area

The burrowed tunnel of newly carved earth suddenly ends, as it breaks into a very different-looking chamber. Rocks and dirt cover the smooth stone floor near the mouth of the tunnel. The area is about 30 feet wide and equally long. To the left, the chamber widens into an octagon-shaped area and plunges into a dark room to the right. From the octagon-shaped area, a narrow passage heads south. A steel door covered with runes and symbols stands slightly ajar on the north wall. Iron supports reinforce the stone walls and ceiling.

Careful examination of the door (Search, DC 16) shows that it was once sealed with a silvery metal, but the seal has been (recently) broken. A character who makes a Knowledge (arcana) check (DC 18) can identify the runes as having warding effects, but those wards are now gone and no longer function.

4. Malignant Wraith (EL 5)

Beyond the door lies a short passage and a stark chamber with the appearance of a vault or perhaps a prison. The walls and floor are bare. An arch in the north wall gives access to another chamber beyond.

If the PCs look into the chamber beyond, a terrible, vivid, purple-red wraith attacks immediately.

Wraith: hp 30, AC 15; +5 incorporeal touch (1d4 plus 1d6 Constitution drain), undead qualities, +2 turn resistance; see MM, page 185

5. Malignant Crystal (EL 5)

This chamber, 30 feet wide and 20 feet deep, looks as stark as those to the south. A pedestal made of stone and carved with a variety of tiny symbols rises 4 feet from the center of the floor. Atop it sits a purple-red crystal, glistening ever so slightly with its own light.

In their quest to find a way in, the Pactlords opened this vault. They destroyed the wraith they found in Area 4 and ignored the crystal. After they left, the crystal, a bane called the *malignant crystal*, caused the wraith to reform.

The *malignant crystal* gives the wraith the negative energy it needs to survive. If left intact, the crystal re-creates a destroyed wraith in 1d6+4 rounds. The PCs can destroy the fragile crystal by inflicting merely 10 points of damage to it (it has a hardness of 2). However, it reforms itself within 1d6+4 hours.

Symbols

A character examining the symbols on the pedestal and succeeding at a Knowledge (religion) check (DC 15) recognizes most, if not all of the markings: They are ancient holy symbols associated with good-aligned gods.

Trap

The pedestal is trapped as a final deterrent to those who would take the crystal. The entire floor of this northernmost chamber is covered in permanently *invisible* wire mesh (caster level 20 for purposes of dispelling). A jolt of electricity shoots through the mesh whenever anyone or anything touches the pedestal or touches something in contact with the pedestal (like the crystal).

Electrified Floor: CR 5; everyone in room suffers electrical touch attack that automatically hits anyone on the floor (4d6 points of damage); Search (DC 20); Disable Device (DC 27)

6. The Warding Sanctuary

This large chamber has two levels. At the bottom, a huge metal device like an iron tower topped with a brass sphere rises at least 30 feet high. Around this strange sphere, an iron catwalk made of a crosshatched grating follows the wall, forming the upper level about 25 feet above the lower. An iron spiral staircase in the southwest corner of the room joins the two levels.

The central tower is a cylinder with a 10-foot diameter. A number of jointed metallic extensions, like the legs of an insect, extend from the tower and connect to the ground or simply jut out into the air at all angles. The top sphere looks about 15 feet across: half the structure's total height. A series of curved plates comprising its brass skin fit together carefully, each bearing a single arcane rune etched into its surface. A few bear images of brass dragons. Here and there on the sphere, a curved plate is missing, exposing an inner gridlike support network of metal bars. The missing plates give the impression that the metallic thing—whatever it is—is either damaged or unfinished.

The floor level has only one apparent exit, a 30-foot-wide passage to the east. The upper level has five exits, two 10-foot-wide archways leading to the north, two to the south, and one massive metal door to the west.

The towerlike device is a *warding generator*, a powerful magical item built by Danar and his dragon ally Saggarintys to maintain the magical wards that seal the Banewarrens. This generator was never completed, however. It does not function, nor has it ever functioned. A character making a Knowledge (arcana) check (DC 20) can identify this structure for what it is and determine that it is unfinished. See Area 9 for details on how it might be finished. If it is completed, and if the breach in Area 3 is repaired, the device would generate the power to reinforce the walls of this area and would forbid teleportation (both aspects as described in the Introduction under "Banewarrens Specifics"). No Sealed Door is keyed to this *generator* (see Area 7), so the warding effect could be nullified only if the device were destroyed. It has a total of 1,000 hit points, hardness 10, and a Break DC of 60.

#1

Show the players illustration #1. (Explain that the picture doesn't show the missing parts and exposed interiors.)

7. The Sealed Door

A steel door 10 feet high and 8 feet wide bars the way to the west. It shimmers with a bluish sheen, the delicate traceries of mystic runes covering its surface. The sheen seems to fill in the hairline gap between the door and the stone sill, like mortar made of light.

In front of the door lie the corpses of four small humanoid creatures with gray-green skin, wearing piecemeal bits of leather armor. A few bloody short swords and axes lie among them as well.

#2

Show the players illustration #2. When the Pactlord Grailquest Team arrived here, they used a ring with a *wish* spell to open this door. Kalerecent (see Area 8), however, managed to close the door again, but only after a green hag named Kikanuile managed to slip through. (The four dead goblins here were not so lucky.) Kalerecent did not know enough Spellcraft to determine what spell they used to open the door.

A character who makes a Knowledge (arcana) check (DC 18) can identify the runes as having warding effects, but the exact type is beyond the understanding of modern lore.

The door has a special combination lock (DC 30 to open, Search DC 25 to find the secret panel in the door which hides the combination device), but opening the lock does not open the door unless the magical seal is broken. This is Danar's special seal of the Banewarrens. *Knock* or similar spells do not open the door. The key that allows the seal to be broken lies within House Vladaam's family vaults (it has been there for untold centuries—see Chapter Four). If the characters use the key to open the door, they break the seal; only the *sealing rod* (found in the Baneheart, Area 24; see Chapter Nine) can seal it again. The door can be locked, *arcane locked*, and so on, but the 9th-level spell effect of the seal is gone until specifically *sealed* again. (The *wish* the Grailquest Team used did not destroy the seal—it only suppressed it briefly—and Kalerecent resealed it immediately when he slammed the door shut.)

The Sealed Door is keyed to the (functioning) *warding generator* beyond, in Area 6 (see Chapter Five). If it is unlocked (as opposed to temporarily breached as the Pactlords did), the *warding generator* powers down. The only way to reactivate the wards is to reseal the door using the *sealing rod*.

8. Kalerecent

A few broken and rotting wooden crates lie about the room. In the middle of the chamber, however, a heavily armored man with long silver hair stands next to what appears to be the dead body of another man. The armored warrior is covered in blood. As he looks up at you, his eyes are filled with rage.

Kalerecent, a paladin devoted to Lothian, waits here, alone in the dark with his fallen comrade. Following an enervating battle with the Pactlords, he retreated here to recover his strength.

Following a lead he gained through an Oldtown resident complaining of strange digging sounds, Kalerecent discovered that monstrous creatures were moving about within Ptolus' city walls. He investigated further. He and his cohort, the monk Rsanir, passed through the manor house under the effects of *potions of invisibility* and eventually followed the Pactlords here. They watched and waited until they determined the gist of what was going on. At that point, they attacked. In the ensuing battle, Kalerecent managed to close the Sealed Door again just after it was opened. But as he did so, the lamia Derimach slew Rsanir. The dead goblins in Area 7 also perished in the fight.

Now Kalerecent seethes with an undercurrent of rage. Not one to let his emotions control him, he does not *appear* to be eager for revenge—but he is. In fact, unless it is clear that the PCs are on the side of good (bearing holy symbols or something similar), Kalerecent may likely attack them. He most certainly will attack if he detects the presence of evil!

Kalerecent can tell the player characters what he knows about the monsters he encountered. He has no knowledge of the Pactlords of the Quaan and does not use that name. He also knows that somewhere in this area there is a lamia that attacked him recently (see Area 11), but the rest of the monsters seem to have left. Currently, Kalerecent is out of spells. He can use his lay on hands ability no more today, and he remains 9 hit points below his maximum.

Kalerecent, male half-elf Pal8: Medium humanoid; HD 8d10–8; hp 38; Init +1; Speed 20 feet; AC 20 (+1 Dex, +9 armor); Attack +12/+7 melee (2d6+4, greatsword); SV Fort +7, Ref +5, Will +7; AL LG; Str 14, Dex 12, Con 8, Int 11, Wis 17, Cha 15

Skills and Feats: Diplomacy +10, Knowledge (religion) +11, Listen +4, Search +1, Spot +4; Leadership, Power Attack, Weapon Focus (greatsword)

Possessions: *+1 holy greatsword, +1 full plate armor, potion of lesser restoration,* 81 gp

Spells (2/1): 1st—*bless weapon, cure light wounds*; 2nd—*resist elements*

9. Parts Room

A number of curved brass plates lie about the floor here. Tools of all sorts surround a toppled (and probably rotten) wooden work table in the middle of the room. The walls are bare.

The parts and tools are here to finish the *generator* in Area 6. After approximately a week of study, a successful Knowledge (arcana) check (DC 35) and Craft (metalworking) check (DC 25) allow a character to use these parts to finish the *generator*. Assume the device is worth 100,000 gp when you're determining how long it would take to complete (minimum of one week).

10. Vermin Wights (EL 6)

A huge iron vat, pocked with patches of rust, stands next to the eastern wall. It is 10 feet high, at least 8 feet in diameter, and has iron rungs on one side to allow someone to climb to the top. Around it are stacks of iron buckets. The dark southeast corner of the room begins to emit a terrible droning sound, and suddenly two horrible humanoid figures composed of tiny insects and worms come forward like thick, black swarms given the shape and form of men.

Danar intended this room to become a vault to store an evil liquid he had come upon, but he never finished it. The vat is empty, and always has been. One of the rungs is loose, however, and anyone climbing to the top of the vat must make a Reflex save or fall 10 feet.

Loose Rung: CR 1/2; fall 10 feet (1d6 points of damage); Reflex save (DC 18) negates; Search (DC 15); Disable Device (DC 18)

Creatures

The evil of the Banewarrens spawns diabolic creatures. For example, a number of burrowing insects and worms were trapped here when the warrens were sealed. When they died, the malignant forces here animated them, giving the mass of vermin a humanoid shape. These masses of undead insects and worms skulk about this area mindlessly. They attack any living creatures they encounter and fight until destroyed.

Vermin Wights (2): hp 24 and 28, AC 15, +3 slam (1d4+1 plus energy drain), undead qualities, half damage from piercing and slashing weapons; see MM, page 183

Special XP Award Modification

While the half damage from piercing and slashing damage isn't enough to increase the individual CR of these creatures, it is worth an increase in the overall EL. Award a 10 percent XP bonus for overcoming these monsters.

11. Lamia (EL 6)

The middle of this room is a 20-foot-square pit. Four thick, rust-covered iron chains hang down into the pit. They are attached to the walls on either side with heavy bolts.

The pit is 20 feet deep, and the chains reach all the way to the bottom, ending in manacles. Originally, this was going to be a vault to imprison some large beast, but it was never finished.

Creature

Derimach is a lamia who was with the Pactlord Grailquest Team. The others left her behind to take care of the paladin while they returned to report what had happened to the rest of the Pactlords. Derimach attacked Kalerecent but was wounded and fell back. She now hides here in the pit (Hide +14). Despite her low hit points, she remains a serious threat because of the magic item she wields—a *bottled whirlwind**.

Derimach, female lamia: hp 58 (currently 24), AC 17, +9 touch (1 point of Wisdom drain), spell-like abilities 1x/day—*charm person, major image, mirror image*; see MM, page 127

Possessions: *Bottled whirlwind**, pouch with 232 gp

* See *The Book of Eldritch Might*.

Tactics

If Derimach hears anyone coming, she uses her *major image* ability to make it appear that a huge monster—most likely an angry, evil cloud giant—is climbing up out of the pit. If, by the sounds of her opponents' reactions, they do not flee immediately, she hurls the *bottled whirlwind* up toward them, where it lands randomly. Then, during the confusion, she attempts to climb up the side of the pit opposite the PCs, using one of the chains (Climb check, DC 12). She can make the climb in 1 round.

12. The Waning Guardian

A 12-foot-tall statue of a helmed warrior, made of interlocking metal plates, stands like a vigilant guard in this chamber, facing north. An iron door leads to the north, but a steel door, covered in etched runes and sealed with silver, stands in the middle of the south wall.

This hall holds an iron golem, positioned as indicated on the map on page 25. What is not readily apparent is that the magic is all but drained from it due to a magical malfunction. Thus, when the intruders enter, it reacts as it was designed to, with a charge and a single devastating slam attack. And then it falls apart, magical energies pouring from its broken seams like thick syrup. Anyone within 5 feet of the golem when this happens must make a Reflex saving throw (DC 16). Those failing this save get "splashed" with magic energy that inflicts 1d6 points of force damage and produces a random effect on the subject as described at right.

Further, the golem has another surprise if prodded or searched. Unless a rogue searches its remnants for magical traps (DC 25) and successfully makes a Disable Device check (DC 25) first, the broken golem bursts, inflicting an additional 3d6 points of force damage in a 10-foot spread.

13. Vault (EL 5)

The steel door leading into this room is locked (DC 25 to open) and sealed with a magical metallic caulk that acts as an *arcane lock* (caster level 10). The door bears the same etched runes as described in Area 7, although not as potent.

This chamber's walls are lined with hammered plates of rusted iron, as is the floor. Old tools and knives, their metal parts rusted as well, lie scattered about; a few hang from hooks on the walls. Four skinless humanoids with black, pulsing eyes open their dry, parched mouths full of needlelike teeth. They stare at you hungrily.

The creatures were once humans afflicted with a terrible malady called Necrophagon (or skinbite fever), which compelled them to slice off and devour their own flesh. The disease they carried was magical, animating them even as they ate themselves to death and giving them an undeniable hunger for flesh. They were imprisoned here so that they could contaminate no one else.

Flayed Ghouls (4): hp 9, 12, 15, 18, AC 14; +3 bite (1d6+1 plus paralysis plus disease†) +0 claws (two attacks, 1d3 plus paralysis), undead qualities, +2 turn resistance; see MM, page 97

† For more information on Necrophagon, see the Banes Appendix.

Magical Energy Splash Effects

d%	Result
01–10	*Struck blind (lasts 1d10+10 minutes)*
11–20	*Knocked unconscious (for 1d10 minutes)*
21–25	*1d3 points temporary Intelligence damage*
26–30	*1d3 points temporary Strength damage*
31–35	*1d3 points temporary Wisdom damage*
36–40	*1d3 points temporary Charisma damage*
41–70	*2d6 additional points of force damage*
71–80	*1d3+1 enhancement bonus to Strength (lasts 30 minutes)*
81–90	*1d3+1 enhancement bonus to Dexterity (lasts 30 minutes)*
91–00	*1d3+1 enhancement bonus to Constitution (lasts 30 minutes)*

14. The Loosed Bane (EL 7)

A long hall, 20 feet wide, stretches to the south. At a T-intersection it splits to the left and right, forming a narrower hall filled with steel doors, some of which hang open. Suddenly, a tall, muscular creature with dark blue skin and wild black hair appears next to you! Its glowing yellow eyes and long claws betray its sinister intent. Its body and hair are dripping with cold water.

The row of steel doors is a collection of small vaults, the majority of which were never used. The Pactlords explored this area, inadvertently freeing both the thought stalker described above and Tavan Zith from Chapter One.

Creature

The thought stalker is a magical creature that was once a troll. Through magic, it was changed into a being that seeks to eat thoughts and memories from living brains. (See the Banes Appendix.) The thought stalker was once much more powerful than it is now, since it has not fed on mental energy in centuries.

Mere moments before the PCs arrived it finally managed to free itself from the ice in Area 17.

Thought Stalker: hp 63; see the Banes Appendix

Tactics

The thought stalker appears and attacks immediately. It then fights as one might expect a troll to, until it suffers any damage. At that point, it flees to the Ethereal Plane. From there, it watches its opponents while it regenerates. It may wait minutes or even hours before attacking again, using its *detect thoughts* ability to determine when a good time to attack might present itself.

Note to DMs

Remember to stage the encounter with the Grailquest Team as described in the event at the beginning of the chapter.

Development

If the thought stalker survives its encounters with the PCs but finds them too powerful to feed upon, it goes up to the city to find prey. With plenty to feed upon, it gains 1 HD each day until it reaches the top end of its advancement range.

15. Empty Vaults

These vaults of various sizes all stand empty—they were never used. The unlocked doors into each one are made of steel with no glyphs or etched runes.

16. Tavan Zith's 'Eternal' Cell

Careful examination of the door (Search, DC 16) to the second most easterly cell shows that it was once sealed with a silvery metal but the seal was broken recently. A character who makes a Knowledge (arcana) check (DC 18) can identify the runes as having warding effects, but those wards are now gone and no longer function.

A long metal box, not unlike a lidless coffin, sits propped upon a stand at a 45 degree angle. An inset amethyst marks each of its four corners. The inside of the box has six pairs of leather straps arranged in a fashion that suggests that something—or more likely someone—was confined within.

The gems once helped channel the magical energy that kept Tavan Zith forever paralyzed and confined here. Now they are nonmagical; each is worth 350 gp. The box sustained his life as well as held him prisoner. When the Pactlords opened this vault, they set him free and left, forgetting about the dark elf immediately.

17. Thought Stalker's 'Eternal' Cell

The door into the most westerly vault is identical to the one described in Area 16.

The enruned steel door to this chamber hangs open. Within, it is extremely cold—almost freezing. Water covers the floor in the room and the hall near the door.

The thought stalker was frozen in a block of special magical ice, both solid and ethereal at the same time. The mass of spell-forged ice was kept here, but upon the opening of its Vault Door, the temperature rose enough to melt the ice and free the creature.

Interlude: Return to the City

Basically, the PCs cannot go farther into the Banewarrens at this point unless they have a *wish*. Eventually, they will head back up to the city. Most likely, they still won't have a very good idea of what's going on. If Kalerecent is with them, he wants to report back to his friends in the Church of Lothian (specifically Brother Fabitor). He asks that the player characters accompany him to the Chapel of St. Gustov in Midtown to provide any information they have. If the PCs went looking for Kalerecent at Brother Fabitor's behest, they likely will join him. If they came under the auspices of working for Jevicca Norr, they may need some convincing. He assures them (truthfully) that the priests will certainly heal their wounds and cure any maladies incurred in his rescue.

Contacting the Church of Lothian

Whether they took his offer earlier or not, Brother Fabitor will want to give the PCs the promised reward of 2,000 gp if they helped bring Kalerecent back to him alive. He is extremely grateful and happy to see his friend, and very interested in the strange news the paladin (and potentially the player characters) report. He asks that Kalerecent and the party accompany him to the Grand Cathedral in the Temple District to convey this information to his superiors in the Church.

If they accept, they become part of an interesting meeting.

The Grand Cathedral is a vast structure of sweeping columns, gilded angels, and long blue carpets woven with golden threads to display Lothian's ankh symbol. After climbing a grand staircase that leads into a breathtaking vestibule, you are led not into the main sanctuary but up a side staircase and down a marble hall into a large meeting

room. The chamber is filled with white-and-blue-robed priests, a few other people, and a pair of guards flanking the door—the room's only apparent exit. The priests' vestments bear the ankh crucifix of Lothian, while the guards wear a shining sun symbol on a field of the same white and blue as the clerics wear.

The guards are low-ranking members of the Church of Lothian's Order of the Dawn. The four priests are Sister Mara von Witten, a middle-aged, brown-haired woman with a motherly presence; Brother Tobias Thad, a young, dark-haired man with angular features and a tall frame; Sister Daliana Varaun, a very old woman with a covered head and a severe countenance; and Brother Heth Neferul, a muscular, fit, middle-aged man with a shaved head. Terestir Malacon is a mirror master* and a devout servant of Lothian who frequently advises and works with the Church hierarchy. He does not wear the robes of a priest, but he does wear all white, plus a mirror ankh on a chain. The others in the room are servants, dressed all in simple white garments.

First, Tobias Thad, the most vocal priest, speaks. He commends the PCs for all they have done and asks them a great many questions about their experiences in the Banewarrens. Then they are introduced to Brother Heth Neferul, who runs a small temple of Lothian, the Chapel of St. Thessina, in the Rivergate District (see Chapter Six).

Brother Heth requests that the player characters take on a new mission—after they enjoy some well-earned rest and relaxation, of course. He would like them to find out what they can about the magic that seals the vaults. The Church, he said, would like to know the secrets of safely containing evil, as used in the Banewarrens. This is a lie. Secretly Brother Heth works for the Pactlords of the Quaan. At this point they seek a way to find and procure the Banewarrens key. So Heth wants the PCs to find (and possibly obtain) it. Quietly.

The other priests seem to agree with Heth that it would be a good idea to learn more about this evil-containing magic, but they make it clear this mission was his idea. They even seem a bit surprised when he produces a scroll.

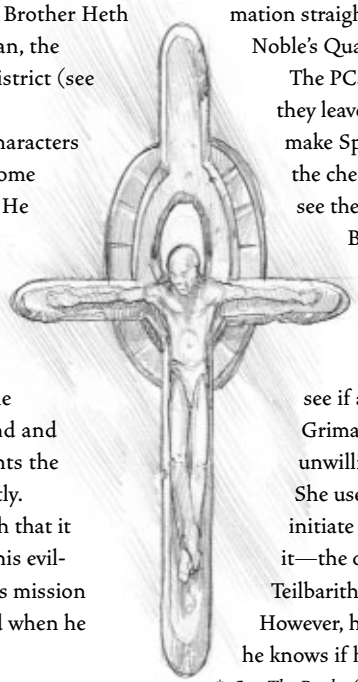
"I had this made by an arcanist for just this mission," he tells the group. "It holds a spell called *legend lore,* and if you cast it next to the door, you may learn some details of the spells that keep the horrible, evil things inside at bay. Of course, that means you will have to go back into that dangerous place."

Of course, none of the others know of Heth's nefarious schemes. Instead, they believe this mission is actually a further test of the PCs' mettle. If they prove worthy, these clerics plan on asking the adventurers to help them retrieve the *sword of truth.*

Only Sister Daliana, if questioned, seems leery or suspicious of this plan, but that is only because she believes the Church should do its best simply to seal the tunnel and have nothing more to do with the Banewarrens.

At the same meeting, Kalerecent volunteers to go back to the Sealed Door and guard it to make sure no one attempts to get through it. Terestir Malacon gives the paladin a *missive token*† (a magical charm that creates a means for Kalerecent to send a short message back to Terestir). All agree that Kalerecent's idea is a good one, and he leaves immediately to get some rest and supplies before going back down. (If the PCs decide to stand guard with him, events unfold as described in "Other Plans," below.)

Unbeknownst to all involved, one of the two Order of the Dawn guards at the door is actually an agent for House Vladaam (yet another traitor in the Church's midst!). As soon as the PCs leave, the guard, Griman Inneston, slips away to alert another agent at a nearby tavern to what she has learned. That agent, Teilbarith Starlook, takes the information straight to the Estate of House Vladaam in the Noble's Quarter.



The PCs have a chance to notice this activity as they leave, but only a slim one. Allow all of them to make Spot checks (DC 25)—or, better yet, make the checks for the players in secret. Even if they see the guard, they may not pay any attention. But if they do, they can follow her (give Griman a Spot check to notice them) to a tavern in Midtown called The Griffon. Teilbarith, a particularly paranoid individual, watches closely to see if anyone is observing him speaking with Griman. If confronted, Griman admits nothing, unwilling to compromise her job at the Church. She uses her position as an Order of the Dawn initiate to call for help, and she can expect to get it—the order commands a lot of respect in Ptolus. Teilbarith prefers simply to run if threatened. However, he tells those intimidating him everything he knows if he feels his life is in danger.

* See *The Book of Eldritch Might*.

† See *Book of Eldritch Might II*: *Songs and Souls of Power*.

Griman Inneston, female human War2/Rog2: CR 3; Medium humanoid; HD 2d8+2 + 2d6+2; hp 21; Init +7; Speed 20 feet; AC 18 (+3 Dex, +5 armor); Attack +7 melee (1d8+3, longsword); SA Sneak attack +1d6; SV Fort +4, Ref +6, Will +0; AL N; Str 14, Dex 17, Con 13, Int 12, Wis 10, Cha 7

Skills and Feats: Climb +1, Handle Animal +2, Hide +1, Intimidate +3, Intuit Direction +5, Jump +4, Listen +3, Move Silently +2, Pick Pocket +7, Search +4, Spot +5; Alertness, Improved Initiative, Weapon Focus (longsword)

Possessions: Masterwork breastplate, masterwork longsword, *hat of disguise*, 33 gp, 29 sp

Teilbarith Starlook, male halfling Rog6: CR 6; Small humanoid; HD 6d6+12; hp 29; Init +9; Speed 20 feet; AC 18 (+5 Dex, +1 Size, +2 armor); Attack +12 melee (1d4–2, dagger), or +12 ranged (1d6, shortbow); SA Sneak attack +3d6; SV Fort +5, Ref +11, Will +3; AL LE; Str 7, Dex 20, Con 14, Int 14, Wis 11, Cha 11

Skills and Feats: Bluff +8, Decipher Script +9, Diplomacy +2, Hide +9, Innuendo +4, Listen +6, Move Silently +13, Open Lock +11, Perform +7, Pick Pocket +12, Read Lips +10, Sense Motive +8, Spot +8, Swim +7, Use Magic Device +4, Use Rope +10; Improved Initiative, Weapon Finesse (dagger), Weapon Focus (dagger)

Possessions: Masterwork leather armor, two masterwork daggers, masterwork shortbow, 20 masterwork arrows, *bag of holding* (bag 1), *potion of haste, potion of cure moderate wounds, potion of levitation, potion of invisibility* (all clearly labeled), masterwork thieves' tools, 34 gp

Contacting the Inverted Pyramid

If the PCs were working for Jevicca Norr, they probably want to get the information they have learned to the Inverted Pyramid. The Ghostly Minstrel, where Jevicca told them to contact her, is an inn with both a dining hall and a taproom of great size. Dozens of patrons are here at almost any time: During the day they occupy the dining hall, feasting on whatever the cooks have prepared (roast venison, pork loin and sage, beefsteak and gravy, and more), while the evening finds them in the taproom enjoying various ales (some heavily spiced), elven wines, or a dwarven stout. In the taproom, a bard or two usually entertains the customers.

The Ghostly Minstrel is where adventurers often gather. Most common folk (who also patronize the place) don't realize it, but even high-level characters come here to discuss the events of the day—and size up other adventurers.

If the player characters ask for Jevicca Norr, they are sure to quickly find someone who can tell them that she usually comes in late in the evening. The PCs eventually catch up with her without too much trouble. She listens while they tell her what they discovered. If at this point they know about the Banewarrens key (see "Investigating," below), and where it lies, she pays them the remainder of their fee right away (700 gp each). If all they know is that currently there is no way in, she thanks them with a smile but says that she really needs to know exactly who wants in, and how they might gain entry (and possibly how it can be stopped). She encourages them to research further.

Either way, she takes this time to tell the PCs how important it is to stop anyone attempting to get into the Banewarrens. If powerful forces are at work trying to get in, she needs to know their chances of success: If they have any chance at all, they must be stopped. If the Banewarrens has been opened, it must be resealed. She assures the group of the importance of her words by offering the PCs each a magic item of their choice worth up to 2,000 gp, deliverable to them in two weeks if they continue to work as her agents in this matter. She implies that rewards of similar value would be forthcoming if the group achieves future successes.

As always, they can contact her here if they need to, or if they have further information to share.

Investigating

The player characters need to discover the existence of the Banewarrens key. At this point, unless Teilbarith Starlook has warned them, the members of House Vladaam know nothing about the Banewarrens and have probably forgotten all about the key they possess. They certainly don't know it will open the Sealed Door. In fact, the Pactlords of the Quaan don't yet know that a key exists.

PCs attempting to do some investigating, either at the behest of Heth Neferul, Jevicca Norr, or on their own, have at least four options before them.

Going Back to the Warrens

This may call for another trip down to the Banewarrens entrance. If the PCs return within two days of their initial exploration, everything remains as they left it. If they return three days after, the Pactlords of the Quaan have returned to seek another way to break down the Sealed Door or get through the walls. This group is composed of any surviving members of the Grailquest Team and a few members of Grailquest Team 2, as needed. They spend only one day there before giving up in frustration, as they lack another *wish*. If the characters show up after the Pactlords have come and gone, a Search check (DC 15) around Area 7 makes it clear that someone has been there trying—unsuccessfully—to open the Sealed Door.

If the PCs spend any time investigating the Sealed Door (Area 7) or if they spoke with Kalerecent at all, they know that it is securely sealed, probably by far more than common means (a lock or even an *arcane lock*). Using the *legend lore* scroll from the Church of Lothian reveals that the door can be unsealed only very briefly by a *wish,* or more permanently by an ancient key that lies in the city above.

Bardic Knowledge or Research

A Bardic Knowledge check reveals the following lore; the amount of information uncovered depends on the result of the check. This knowledge cannot be gained with the Gather Information skill, but a character could learn through a Research check (see sidebar) made at one of the many large libraries in Ptolus (in the Grand Cathedral of Lothian, the Inverted Pyramid, the Delver's Guild headquarters in Oldtown, and so on).

Result	Knowledge
20	The Banewarrens was said to be sealed with the highest level of spells. If the lore of such spells still exists, it is probably locked up in the Banewarrens or in Jabel Shammar, the fortress atop the Spire.
23	Even the walls are enchanted and laced with exotic materials that make them virtually impregnable. Certain doors of the Banewarrens are sealed with extravagantly powerful spells that only a special key can open.
26	The key to the Banewarrens is rumored to be in the possession of House Vladaam.

A character wishing to look into the references from the note found in the bag in Area 1 finds out very little. Only one reference in the note leads to anything: The phrase "Tremoc Korin" can be translated from ancient Elvish to mean "the Baneheart."

Using Gather Information or Consulting a Loremaster

A Gather Information check (DC 18) can provide the name of a knowledgeable human loremaster named Ishara Jare (Wiz8/Loremaster5, neutral). If the PCs seek her out, they find her house in the Rivergate District. It is a fairly simple dwelling, filled with books and scrolls from floor to ceiling. Ishara Jare is middle aged and pleasant, but quiet. She has a gentle, soft-spoken manner and seems exceedingly intelligent and well-informed. Her assistant, a short, fat man named Vesto Kama, fetches books or papers when she needs to reference something. Otherwise, he gets visitors beverages while they speak with Ishara.

Ishara listens to their questions, occasionally writing notes to herself. Eventually she asks the PCs for two days to do some research. She has some ideas but wants to confirm her suspicions with facts. She will need 120 gp to cover her expenses and time.

In two days, if the characters return, Ishara has the information that would be revealed by a Research check (DC 26), as discussed in "Bardic Knowledge or Research" above. She tells them what she has learned—most importantly, that House Vladaam has the key. She can fill them in on House Vladaam's dire reputation and makes it clear that if the family learns what the PCs know, they will either use the key for their own evil purposes or sell it to the characters' foes.

Of course, the PCs can take care of that problem by obtaining the key first—either by buying it or stealing it.

If they want to go the theft route, Ishara can even recommend someone to help them sneak into the estate of House Vladaam: Nicalon Regelis of the Knights of the Chord. Nicalon has made it clear he is an enemy of Vladaam, and he knows a lot about them: Rumor has it he worked for the family at one point. What even Ishara does not realize is that Nicalon Regelis is actually a false identity used by Navanna Vladaam (see Chapter Four).

Variant Rule: Research Check

When the player characters need to find a fact in a library or similar storehouse of knowledge, they can make a Research check. This is an Intelligence check, although characters gain a special +5 synergy bonus if they already have at least 5 ranks in an applicable Knowledge skill.

A Strange Message

Lastly, if all other options fail, the PCs receive a message by courier from a man named Danneth Sonnell at Mahdoth's Asylum. It seems that an inmate has been asking for them.

If the PCs investigate, the inmate's name is Tabaen Farsong. He is the elf noble whose latent divination power Tavan Zith activated in Chapter One. Tabaen has seen visions pertaining to the PCs, and he wanted to alert them. Of course, he is completely mad now, with only occasional moments of clarity. Danneth Sonnell, the caretaker in charge of the asylum, seems leery about letting the PCs speak to the deranged elf at all, but since he is so insistent, Danneth allows it.

If Tabaen was either killed or cured in Chapter One, don't use this encounter.

Tabaen has deteriorated greatly even since you last saw him on the street. His eyes are sunken and his frame has withered. He wears leather restraints that bind his hands together and to a strap around his waist—probably because of all the clawed scratches near his eyes. He babbles quietly to himself, but when he sees you, his voice rises.

"A key. A key. You know the door. The key is deep under Vladaam. You have to get it. You have to get in to keep people out. Many dangers. So many evils. The key is a hand. You must use it so that they cannot. Use it to find the staff that will destroy it. A key that is a hand and a staff that is a knife."

His voice trails off and his gaze drops to the floor. He ignores you.

Using the Knowledge

If the player characters learn about the key, they have five basic options before them.

1. They attempt to break into House Vladaam to get the key, either to use it for themselves, to make sure no one else gets hold of it, or to ensure that House Vladaam doesn't use it. See Chapter Four.
2. They attempt to get the key by other means: purchase, negotiation, etc. See Chapter Four.
3. They decide to bring the news to Brother Heth Neferul, who thanks them and gives them a reward of 1,000 gp for the information. (He then promptly alerts the Pactlords of the Quaan, who attempt to break into House Vladaam to get the key.) Brother Heth also may urge the PCs to get such an important key out of the hands of the "dangerous Vladaam family."
4. They decide that no one should have the key and keep quiet. The PCs later hear from the Lothianite arcanist Terestir Malacon. According to Kalerecent, he says, some people have come to the Sealed Door bearing what appears to be a magical key. Should this outcome occur, this is the last they hear from Kalerecent. If the PCs investigate, they find the Sealed Door now unsealed (but still locked). Kalerecent is dead, and Navanna Vladaam is now inside. (If she never discovers the truth about her family's key from the PCs, she later hears about the Banewarrens door through her spy Teilbarith, who got the information from his source in the Church of Lothian's Order of the Dawn.)
5. They ignore the whole issue and explore other avenues of inquiry. See #4. above.

Other Plans

Of course, the PCs might decide to take matters into their own hands or try some other course of action. They may attempt to find a different way into the Banewarrens. This won't work, because there is no other way in. Only the key or a *wish* spell will open that Sealed Door (note that a *wish* spell can't even teleport a character inside—it only suppresses the sealing magic for about 10 rounds, or until someone closes the door again).

Characters might attempt to seal the tunnel detailed in Chapter Two with a *wall of stone,* or cause it to collapse. This would prove a setback for those who want to get in, but a minor one at best, since another burrowing creature, a *pass-wall* spell, or even a bunch of miners can dig a new tunnel or tunnel section.

The player characters might decide to go with Kalerecent to guard. If they do, eventually Navanna Vladaam shows up with the key. The PCs probably would prove unable to hold off Navanna and her werewolf henchmen, so this tactic most likely results in failure. Of course, Navanna does not show up and attack immediately. She is far more likely to use guile to get past the group and open the door. She does not really care what happens to them after that—she just wants in. And of course, the Pactlords of the Quaan (Grailquest Team 2) are probably close at her heels, unbeknownst to her. In the best possible result for this scenario (still allowing you to play the whole adventure), Navanna gets the door open and somehow at least some of the PCs survive the encounter.

Dead End

It is possible that the PCs no longer find themselves sufficiently motivated at this point to investigate the Banewarrens further, or to try to get the key from House Vladaam. Should this happen, the DM can introduce a new adventure completely unrelated to the Banewarrens. However, in the course of this short side adventure, the PCs become indebted to the Church of Lothian or the Inverted Pyramid, gain some sort of enmity with House Vladaam, or learn that something of personal importance to them lies within the Banewarrens. Any of these hooks should bring them back into the flow of this adventure.

Enter House Vladaam

Use this chapter if the player characters attempt to get the Banewarrens key from House Vladaam. The "key" is actually Danar's own mummified hand, which has been sitting in the family's personal vault for centuries. Most likely, Teilbarith has alerted the family by now, and the Vladaams are preparing to do something with the key. Ultimately, they want to use it for themselves to gain access to the Banewarrens. They have possessed the key for as long as any of them can remember—they knew it was a key thanks to an identify *spell—but they've never been able to find a door it might open. Now, that's all changed!*

While Iristul Vladaam, the head of the house, is away, his daughter Navanna runs things. All of the Vladaams are wicked and cruel, but Navanna is also extremely devious and more cautious than most of her relations. She maintains a number of false identities in the city, including one as a member of the Knights of the Chord; the PCs likely encounter her using this identity, at least at first. Because of her caution, even though she now knows of a door her key will open, she does not want anyone to suspect her family is involved with the Banewarrens. Thus, she will encourage the PCs to steal it.

If the PCs stopped Teilbarith from getting the information to House Vladaam in Chapter Three, it is possible that no one in the noble family knows anything about a door into the Banewarrens.

The Knights of the Chord

The Knights of the Chord are a small knightly order dedicated to upholding freedom and protecting the innocent. The knights all have mastered, to some degree, the art of drawing power from music and song. While many may have at one time been bards, they are no longer minstrels. The knights are a martial order and focus heavily on combat skills. They own a small keep in Oldtown called the Jodan Templehall, which serves as an informal temple to Jode, goddess of music, as well as the order's headquarters. Many knights live at the hall, while others simply use it as a base of operations when in Ptolus. The templehall has a chapel, practice hall, meeting room/dining hall, kitchen, single-room apartments for some of the knights, and an office suite for the order's leader, Hallusiun Everfar (male elf, Ftr3/Brd6/Knight of the Chord8).

Navanna Vladaam poses as Nicalon Regelis of the Knights of the Chord. As Nicalon, a tall, thin, dark-skinned human man, she speaks out strongly against House Vladaam in order to position herself to learn what her enemies have to say. Nicalon keeps to himself most of the time, so few of the other knights know anything about him. He seems to be a devout worshipper of Jode but very poor at calling upon the magical power of music. Nicalon is entirely a creation of Navanna's. She used her brother Aliaster's magical aid to fake her way through the order's initiation rites.

If the PCs come to the Jodan Templehall looking for Nicalon Regelis (at the suggestion of Ishara Jare), he is not present, but they are welcome to leave a message for him. The order has no current contact information for him and believes him to be outside the city on a quest.

Navanna (as Nicalon) checks in fairly regularly, however. She is intrigued to hear that the PCs were looking for Nicalon—the same people whom Teilbarith told her met with the clerics of Lothian about the Banewarrens. "Nicalon" sends the characters a message soon after requesting a meeting. He suggests a tavern/inn in Midtown called the Griffon.

Before going to the meeting, Navanna disguises herself and has Aliaster cast *misdirection* on her to avoid *detect evil* or similar spells. At the Griffon, Nicalon comes across as an extremely driven but stalwart champion for good. He explains that Navanna Vladaam murdered his family years ago when she robbed them; because of the House's position, she escaped punishment. Now he seeks to do whatever he can to take power away from the evil family. If the PCs tell him about the key, or even mention that House Vladaam has something they need, Nicalon seems eager to help them break in to the noble estate and take it.

Navanna's goal here is to make it appear that someone has stolen the Banewarrens key from House Vladaam. That way, when someone (her) enters the Banewarrens, it does not appear that her family could have had anything to do with it. What better way than to lead the thieves into her home herself, posing as their newfound ally, Nicalon Regelis?

Navanna plays her role well, making it clear that Nicalon is a chaotic good character, quite capable of providing a lot of aid to the mission. Nicalon tells the group that he knows a great deal about the estate and believes he can get them in. He even makes it clear that they should take steps so that no innocents are harmed in the break-in.

Her real appearance is that of a short-haired, round-faced human woman in her twenties, extremely fit and thin. Her skin and hair are extraordinarily black—almost blue—so that she might be mistaken for a dark elf. However, her teeth are bright yellow, and she has four tiny yellow horns on her forehead right at the hairline.

Navanna Vladaam, female tiefling Rog6/Ftr5: CR 12; Medium humanoid; HD 6d6+18 + 5d10+15; hp 85; Init +7; Speed 30 feet; AC 19 (+3 Dex, +4 armor, +2 buckler); Attack +14/+9 melee (1d8+4, longsword), or +13/+8 ranged (1d8+3, longbow); SA *Darkness* 1x/day, +3d6 sneak attack; SQ Fire, cold,

and electricity resistance 5; SV Fort +9, Ref +9, Will +5; AL CE; Str 16, Dex 17, Con 17, Int 14, Wis 14, Cha 15

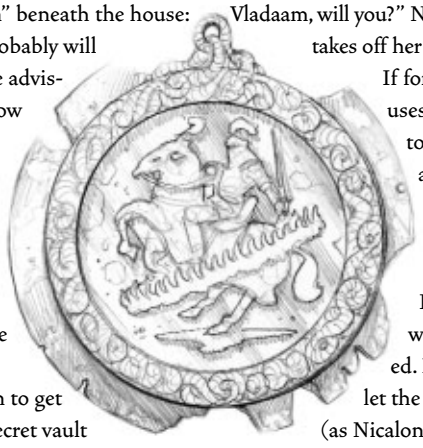
Skills and Feats: Bluff +12, Diplomacy +8, Disable Device +8, Disguise +15, Forgery +8, Hide +9, Listen +6, Move Silently +11, Open Lock +10, Search +4, Sense Motive +10, Spot +7, Swim +9, Tumble +10, Use Magic Device +11; Blind-Fight, Dodge, Expertise, Improved Initiative, Mobility, Weapon Focus (longsword), Weapon Specialization (longsword)

Possessions: *Cloak of charisma +2*, *headband of dimension door* (1x/day), *+1 longsword of subtlety*, *+2 leather armor, +1 buckler, potions of cure moderate wounds, cat's grace, nondetection, glibness,* and *invisibility,* mighty masterwork longbow (Strength +3), 12 masterwork arrows, two doses of deathblade poison, gold necklace worth 500 gp, gold and emerald ring worth 1,700 gp

Breaking In

If Navanna is with the PCs, she engineers things ahead of time so that they meet only minimal resistance approaching and entering the estate. Aliaster remains hidden away from any potential conflict. The guards and servants are instructed to keep out of sight for the most part and ignore any strange noises.

Nicalon tells the characters that the family would keep the key in what they call their "strong room" beneath the house: in other words, the dungeons. There probably will be guards and traps, he warns them. He advises sneaking in at night through a window in the library—that's where the secret door down into the dungeons lies. He explains that he saw all this when he was held in those dungeons for a time, after he tried to force Iristul Vladaam into a duel about a year ago.



As Nicalon, Navanna subtly urges the PCs to go straight to the strong room where the key is. She doesn't want them to get to the prison and certainly not to the secret vault (see page 41). Once they get the key, Nicalon urges them to escape. The Knight of the Chord clearly frowns on any character's desire to loot or take anything that they didn't come for. He tells them he's no common thief—he only wants to take what is important to the group's mission.

Surprise Events

Of course, nothing ever goes as planned. A few things can occur (if the DM wishes it) that surprise even Navanna.

1. Some guards get in the way. Forgetting their orders to keep out of sight or simply getting caught in the wrong place at the wrong time, some guards might actually encounter the PCs and Nicalon in the yard or the house. Should this meeting occur, the guards must pretend to try to stop the intruders. Soon they may have to fight for their lives, because Navanna will not hold back. She is more than willing to kill her own house guard in order to conceal her deception.

2. Aliaster gets involved. Again, in a case of being in the wrong place at the wrong time—or if the PCs try to go into his bedchamber or study—Aliaster may get involved. Unless his personal valuables seem at risk, however, he simply flees (probably by teleporting).

3. A guard or servant gives Navanna away. If the intruders come upon a servant or a guard, he or she might slip and give Nicalon a look of obvious recognition (allow the PCs Spot checks [DC 18] to notice). Or, worse, one might actually reply "Yes, mistress" to something Nicalon says. If it looks as though her ruse is falling apart, Navanna flees, leaving the player characters to the mercy of the house guards and her agents.

Once They Have the Key

Once the group has the key, the second half of Navanna's plan comes into play. She has instructed two of her agents (see "Navanna's Agents," below) to follow them once they leave the estate (assuming they do not teleport out). Once they all escape with the key, she (as Nicalon) asks to examine it. And then she *dimension doors* away into a nearby building. At that moment the two agents attack, shouting, "Steal from House Vladaam, will you?" Navanna drinks her *potion of invisibility*, takes off her disguise, and sneaks back to the estate. If for some reason that plan won't work, she uses a special hand signal to get her agents to attack while she is with the PCs. Then, as Nicalon, she grabs for the key in the ensuing melee and gets away.

In short, Navanna does whatever she can to get the key away from the PCs. It's important to her that it is "Nicalon" who steals the key, so she is not implicated. If that's not possible, though, she may let the PCs get away with the key, leave them (as Nicalon) for the night, then sneak back later and steal it from them using her roguish skills. (The *potion of invisibility* and *headband of dimension door* certainly help.)

To top it all off, the Vladaam family begins spreading the word that their estate was robbed. They even give the authorities vague descriptions of the player characters.

Breaking in Alone

Of course, the PCs may attempt to break into the estate without Nicalon's help. In this case, the guards are on alert, and the spells warding the house are all active. If present, Navanna has at least one of her agents with her at all times. Worst of all for the PCs, Aliaster—if present and assuming he becomes aware of the intruders—uses his magic against them.

If possible, Navanna and Aliaster attempt to capture at least one of the intruders, imprisoning the character in their

dungeons. Then, they use the torture chamber to attempt to extract the information they desire.

The Vladaams instead may choose to call the city guards, who respond very quickly to trouble in the Noble's Quarter. In such a case, the PCs may end up in prison.

Negotiating With House Vladaam

The player characters may decide not to try such a daring and illegal act as breaking in and stealing the key. They may attempt to procure it through more conventional means instead. "Nicalon," if given the opportunity, warns them that House Vladaam can't be trusted. The Knight of the Chord refuses to go with them on a mission of negotiation.

If the PCs attempt to negotiate for the key, or to buy it, Navanna meets with them (as herself) and appears quite accommodating. The characters are treated to a warm welcome at the estate and are offered expensive wines and pastries. Navanna pretends to be suspicious of their motives (even though she is probably aware of them). She wants the Banewarrens opened, as long as her family appears to be uninvolved, so she is willing to give or sell the key to the group. However, she asks many subtle and a few pointed questions regarding "who you work for" and "who else is involved." This is information she actually wants.

To keep up appearances, Navanna asks for 1,000 gp, assuming the PCs simply want to buy the key. If they are looking to strike a deal, she asks the PCs to allow a friend of hers (one of her agents) to accompany them when they use the key. If the PCs seem particular inept at negotiating, she asks for both.

Either way, Navanna intends on stealing the key back. If the PCs agree to let one of her "friends" accompany them, Navanna sends Guire Haltiss, one of her urban werewolf agents. He becomes her "inside man" who, at a predetermined time, distracts the adventurers while Navanna herself (in disguise) sneaks in invisibly, grabs the key, and uses *dimension door* to get away. If need be, he will even attack the group to distract them. Use the agent stats below for Guire.

Navanna's Agents

Navanna's personal agents are all werewolves, although she is not a lycanthrope herself. They live in the outbuilding behind the house.

Navanna's Personal Agent, male human (urban werewolf) War5: CR 6; Medium shapechanger; HD 5d10+20; hp 60; Init +8; Speed 40 feet; AC 20 (+4 Dex, +4 natural, +2 bracers); Attack +11 melee (1d6+5 bite), or +10 ranged (1d6+5, javelin); SQ Scent, DR 15/silver; SV Fort +10, Ref +3, Will +4; AL NE; Str 20, Dex 18, Con 18, Int 12, Wis 12, Cha 11

Skills and Feats: Balance +6, Handle Animal +8 (+12 with dogs or wolves), Hide +4, Jump +13, Listen +5, Move Silently +6, Search +8, Spot +5; Blind-Fight, Cleave, Improved Initiative, Toughness, Weapon Focus (Bite)

Possessions: Three masterwork javelins, *+2 bracers of armor*

Other Family Members

Aliaster Vladaam is the only other member of the House likely present during the course of this adventure. The head of the family, Iristul, is abroad seeking evil weapons called *hungerswords*. He is father to both Navanna and Aliaster (their mothers are dead). Iristul is not involved in this adventure, but he is a 8th-level fighter/10th-level blackguard.

Aliaster appears to be a human in his fifties with completely black eyes. He wears special lenses to disguise his eyes if he feels the need, but when lounging about the estate (which is what he normally does), he does not wear them. He has six fingers on each hand and six toes on each foot.

While Navanna possesses great ambition and drive, Aliaster does not. What little motivation he has he puts into his study of magic. Aliaster helps his younger half-sister with her schemes by casting spells on her or for her in the simple hope that she will leave him alone and not actually force him to go directly into a dangerous situation. His cowardice seems doubly surprising, as his unnatural heritage has clearly left him much sturdier than a typical wizard.

Navanna's Urban Werewolves

Navanna's werewolves do not use traditional rules for lycanthropes. The agents that work for her take either their normal form (usually human) or a hybrid form. In their hybrid form, the agents look like hulking, furry bipedal creatures. As hybrids, they simply add the following to their normal forms:

Hit Dice increase by one type (d12 maximum)

Add +10 to speed

Add +4 natural bonus to AC

A bite attack inflicts 1d6 points of damage and inflicts lycanthropy (Fortitude save, DC 15)

Add DR 15/silver

Include the ability to shift forms as a standard action

Include the scent ability

Add +2 racial bonus to Fortitude and Will saves

Add +4 racial bonus to Strength, Dexterity, and Constitution

Add +4 racial bonus to Search, Spot, and Listen and all checks having to do with influencing wolves or dogs

Add the Blind-Fight and Improved Initiative feats

Add +2 to normal CR

Aliaster Vladaam, male tiefling Wiz13: CR 14; Medium humanoid; HD 13d4+52; hp 91; Init +2; Speed 30 feet; AC 12 (+2 Dex); Attack +7/+2 melee; SA *Darkness* 1x/day; SQ Fire, cold, and electricity resistance 5; SV Fort +8, Ref +8, Will +9; AL CE; Str 12, Dex 14, Con 19, Int 19, Wis 12, Cha 12

Skills and Feats: Alchemy +20, Appraise +7, Concentration +20, Knowledge (arcana) +19, Knowledge (history) +19, Knowledge (local) +5, Listen +4, Profession +17, Scry +18,

Spot +7; Alertness, Combat Casting, Empower Spell, Heighten Spell, Lace Spell: Unholy*; Lightning Reflexes, Quicken Spell, Scribe Scroll

Possessions: *Ring of spell storing* (*unholy aura*), *wand of lightning bolt* (41 charges), scroll of *flesh to stone, potion of cat's grace,* masterwork dagger, one dose of wyvern poison, platinum black pearl ring worth 850 gp

Spells (4/5/5/5/5/3/2/1): 0—*daze, detect magic, mage hand, read magic*; 1st—*burning hands, charm person, mage armor, magic missile, shield*; 2nd—*ghoul touch, mirror image, misdirection, web, whispering wind*; 3rd—*fly, gaseous form, haste, lightning bolt, suggestion*; 4th—*improved invisibility, polymorph self, scrying, wall of ice*; 5th—*cone of cold, teleport, wall of stone*; 6th—*chain lightning,* heightened *suggestion*; 7th—*finger of death*

* See *The Book of Eldritch Might*.

Key to the Estate

The wall around the estate's grounds is 12 feet high, a foot thick, and made of large blocks of stone. The single set of gates leading into the grounds is made of iron bars.

Yard

The yard is one of rolling hills covered by a well-manicured lawn. Trees and shrubs are common; large, thick patches of them cover much of the grounds.

Guard House (EL 3)

A southerly path leads from the gates to a large stone building. This structure houses five guards at any given time; the family actually employs 15 guards total to work here in shifts. This simple bunkhouse has no special features. Security is actually quite lax: These guards come out only if called, if someone comes to the gates (which they watch from a window), or if the dogs in the kennel (see below) sound upset. If Navanna is "breaking into" the estate, they've been told to stay in the guard house no matter what they see or hear.

Vladaam Guard, male human War1 (5): CR 1/2; Medium humanoid; HD 1d8+4; hp 12; Init +6 (+2 Dex, +4 Improved initiative); Speed 20 feet; AC 19 (+2 Dex, +5 armor, +2 shield); Attack +4 melee (1d8+2, longsword), or +3 ranged (1d8, longbow); SV Fort +6, Ref +2, Will +0; AL N; Str 14, Dex 14, Con 18, Int 10, Wis 10, Cha 13

Skills and Feats: Climb +3, Handle Animal +5, Jump +3, Listen +2, Spot +2; Alertness, Improved Initiative

Possessions: Masterwork breastplate, large wooden shield, masterwork longsword, longbow, 20 arrows, *potion of cure light wounds*

Stables

A large wooden structure on the western end of the grounds offers room for as many as 10 horses but usually only houses four. Two are riding horses, while two are used by the family to pull a large black carriage embossed with the House symbol in gold on both sides. They keep this carriage, which they use to travel about town, here in the stables as well.

Six servants live in a room behind the stables. These people tend the horses as well as the grounds. Thus, aside from saddles, bridles, and other tack and grooming supplies, the stables store all manner of tools. If confronted, the servants are easily intimidated and run from any threat. They are all 1st-level commoners with 1 or 2 hit points.

Kennel (EL 8)

Another large wooden structure, the kennel provides shelter for eight large dogs and their keeper, Stegoar, one of Navanna's urban werewolves. Normally he lets the dogs run the yard twice each night and once during the day. They are very well trained and obey commands from him or either of the Vladaams. Also, remember that the urban werewolves have a special affinity for handling dogs. Stegoar isn't as skilled a warrior as Navanna's agents; kennel keeper is a position enjoyed by a newcomer to their ranks. If the dogs encounter someone they do not recognize who is not in the company of a person they know, they attack, barking loudly to draw attention.

If Navanna is "breaking into" the estate, Stegoar does not let the dogs run that night.

Stegoar, Urban Werewolf, male human War1: CR 3; Medium humanoid; HD 1d10+5; hp 14; Init +6; Speed 40 feet; AC 19 (+4 Dex, +4 natural, +1 bracers); Attack +5 melee (1d6+4 bite), or +5 ranged (1d6+4, javelin); SQ Scent, DR 15/silver; SV Fort +10, Ref +6, Will +2; AL N; Str 18, Dex 18, Con 20, Int 10, Wis 10, Cha 13

Skills and Feats: Climb +6, Handle Animal +5 (+4 with wolves or dogs), Hide +2, Jump +6, Listen +4, Move Silently +2, Search +4, Spot +4; Alertness, Blind-Fight, Improved Initiative, Lightning Reflexes

Possessions: Three javelins, *+1 bracers of armor*

Guard Dog (Medium, treat as riding dog) (8): 13 hp, AC 16, +3 bite (1d6+3), scent; see MM, page 196

Outbuilding (EL Varies)

A stone building in the east corner of the grounds was built as servant quarters and storage. Now it serves as a barracks for Navanna's agents. A total of 10 of these urban werewolves live here. Those not currently out and about (guarding Navanna or on a specific mission dictated by her) usually remain here. At any given time at least two are in the city on business in their normal forms. The building is a simple barracks with beds, a few dressers and chests, and so on. It contains nothing of value.

Depending on how many agents are present, the Encounter Level here could reach as high as EL 11.

The House

Inside the house itself, the doors are all standard wooden doors except where noted. The windows all open on hinges and can be locked (DC 27 to open). Typically servants lock the main doors into the house at night (DC 30 to open).

The house is warded by several special spells. An *alarm*-like trigger, for example, registers if any window is broken or forced open, or if any locked door is forced open. This alarm alerts Aliaster and at the same time fills the entire house with a *guards and wards* effect, complete with a *suggestion* in Aliaster's study to "leave the house immediately" (see the spell *guards and wards* in the *Player's Handbook* for more information).

A total of 10 servants and two guards occupy the house at any given time. (Use the stats provided above in the descriptions of the guard house and stables.)

The house is full of valuable works of art and bric-a-brac. Characters wishing to steal such items gain Nicalon's disapproval, if he is present. ("That's not what we're here for.") However, the PCs could earn up to 500 gp each if they are willing to carry a lot. Such thieves gain Navanna's displeasure, however, and when possible she will attempt to exact revenge and recover the items.

Ground Floor

1. Grand Entry Hall. This elaborate, gothic room features elegant family portraits and carved wood accents. The Vladaam crest (see page 36) is done as a huge floor mosaic.

2. Guard Chamber. A guard (just like those found in the guard house) is stationed here at all times.

3. Guard Chamber. A guard (just like those found in the guard house) is stationed here at all times. This room also allows access to the kitchen via Area 4.

4. Storeroom. This chamber stores miscellaneous items: tools, supplies, and so on.

5. Kitchen. At night, a number of servants sleep here. A back door here serves as the servants' entrance.

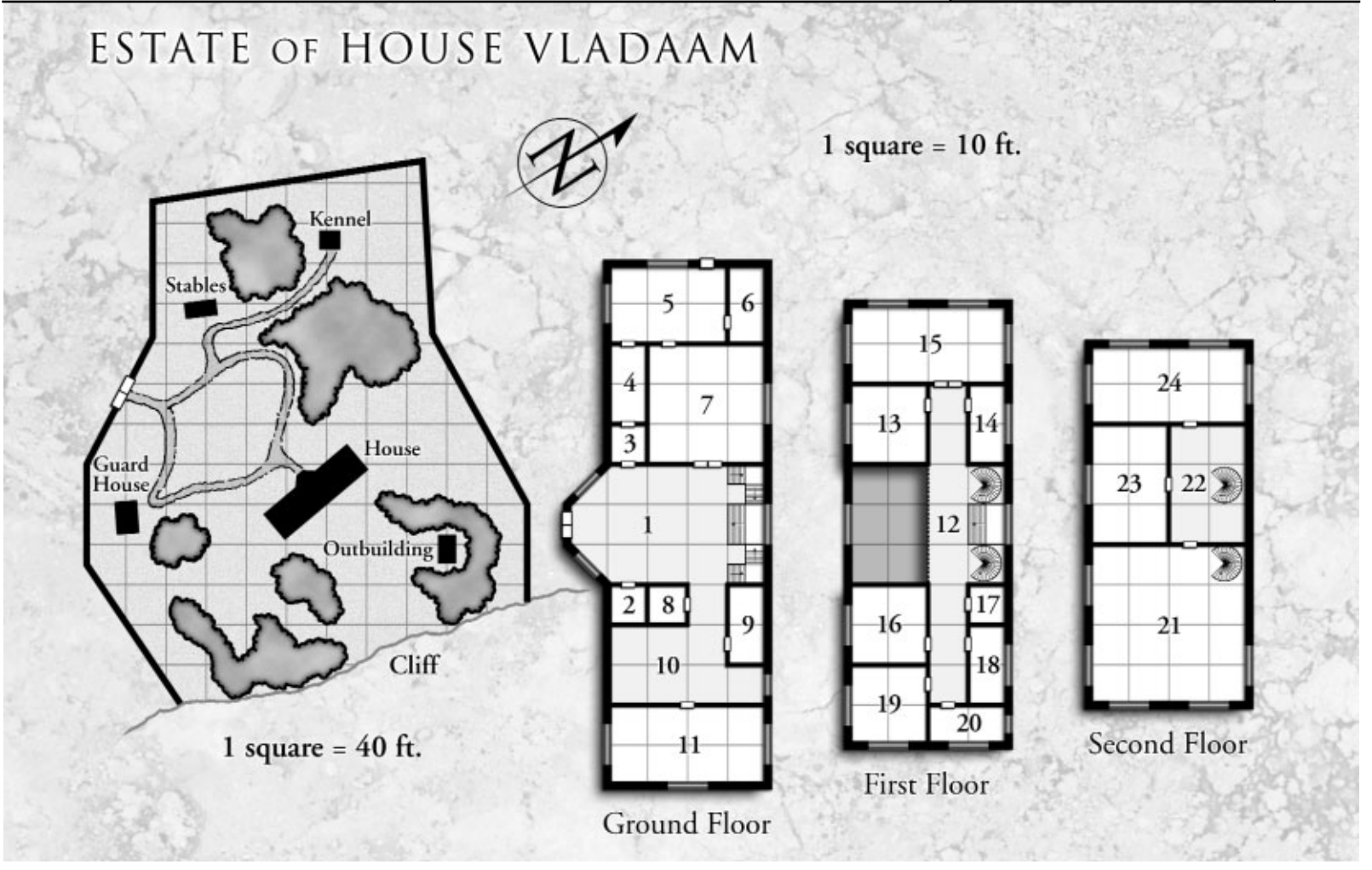
6. Pantry. This well-stocked pantry also features an extensive wine selection. At night, a few servants sleep here.

7. Dining Room. The elegant dining room includes a huge table, 10 chairs, an ornate chandelier, and fine paintings.

8. Storage Closet. A large closet off the entry hall holds linens, dishes, and some extra furniture.

9. Sauna/Bath. This luxury room comes equipped with magical heating implements to warm the water and even create a steam bath.

10. Sitting Room. This parlor is elegantly furnished.



11. Library. Very well stocked, the Vladaam library seems particularly complete on the subjects of history and magic. Many of the books here are valuable. A secret trap door (Search DC 20 to find) leads down into the dungeons.

First Floor

12. Balcony. A long balcony, carpeted in a silk rug, overlooks the Grand Entry Hall.

13. Guest Bedchamber. The guest rooms here are as finely furnished as the family's own chambers.

14. Aliaster's Study. The door to Aliaster's workshop is always *arcane locked.* The chamber is filled with books (including his spellbooks) and tools for making magic items. A mirror here is suitable for scrying, and odd curios occupy almost every available surface. Aliaster protects his spellbooks and 11 other objects in the room with *knavescour.*†

Spellbook 1: 0—*arcane mark, dancing lights, daze, detect magic, detect poison, disrupt undead, flare, ghost sound, light, mage hand, mending, open/close, prestidigitation, ray of frost, read magic, resistance*; 1st—*burning hands, charm person, jump, mage armor, magic missile, shield, summon monster I;* 2nd—*arcane lock, ghoul touch, glitterdust, invisibility, knock, Melf's acid arrow, mirror image, misdirection, web, whispering wind*; 3rd—*fly, gaseous form, haste, lightning bolt, slow, suggestion*

Spellbook 2: 4th—*improved invisibility, knavescour†, polymorph self, scrying, spelltrap*, summon monster IV, wall of ice;* 5th—*cone of cold, cross of lightning*, hold monster, permanency, teleport, wall of stone*; 6th—*chain lightning, conditional spell*, contingency, flesh to stone, geas/quest, mass haste, permanent image, Tenser's transformation*; 7th—*finger of death, mass invisibility, teleport without error*

15. Aliaster's Bedchamber. The door to this elegantly furnished room always remains *arcane locked.* Here Aliaster keeps still more books on magic.

16. Guest Bedchamber. Elegantly furnished.

17. Bathroom.

18. and 19. Guest Bedchambers. The guest rooms here are as finely furnished as the family's own chambers.

20. Salon. This charming sitting room catches the morning sunlight.

* See *The Book of Eldritch Might*.

† See *Book of Eldritch Might II: Songs and Souls of Power.*

Second Floor

21. Ballroom. In this formal chamber Iristul and his clan hold large gatherings, meetings, and parties. Aliaster also uses it as a summoning chamber when he needs one. The ballroom's décor includes wall displays of ornate weapons and shields.

22. Trophy Room. All sorts of beast and animal heads, as well as stuffed specimens in their entirely, are displayed here.

23. Navanna's Bedchamber. The door to Navanna's room always remains locked (DC 30 to open). The whips and chains found in this otherwise elegant room betray something of the occupant's personality.

24. Iristul's Bedchamber. The door to Iristul's room always remains locked (DC 30 to open). Aside from its grand furnishings, it holds a number of prized weapons, including a *+1 unholy battleaxe*.

Below House Vladaam

The following briefly describes the dungeons below the house. A little more detail is provided here than for the structure above, as the PCs likely will focus their attention here.

1. Trapped Hall (EL 10). The northern 50-foot section of this large, long hall is trapped. Every 10 feet from north to south, a poison dart trap fires whenever 100 lbs. is placed on the floor in that section. Thus, this hall has five different traps.

Poison Dart Trap (5): CR 6; +14 attack roll (1d4 points of damage plus wyvern poison—2d6/2d6 Constitution damage; Fortitude save (DC 17) resists the poison; Search (DC 20); Disable Device (DC 16)

2. Outer Strong Room (EL 6). The locked iron doors here (DC 30 to open) are trapped with a supercharged *firetrap*.

Super *Firetrap*: CR 6; 5d6+20 points of fire damage in a 10-foot radius; Reflex save (DC 19) halves; Search (DC 31); Disable Device (DC 31)

3. Inner Strong Room. An iron double door into this room is locked (DC 30 to open). To all appearances, this is the vault of House Vladaam. Navanna certainly works to foster that appearance. The Banewarrens key is here, wrapped in cloth in a bronze box. Also in the room are 12 art objects and nonmagical relics, each worth about 200 gp, as well as a locked coffer (DC 30 to open) containing 1,218 gp. PCs wishing to take such items gain Nicalon's disapproval, if he is present. ("That's not what we're here for.")

4. Training Room. The Vladaam family uses this room for training and practicing both physical and magical combat. Often, they fight against prisoners or purchased slaves, usually ending in the opponent's death. The training room walls hold a number of weapons and shields.

5. Prison. House Vladaam always keeps prisoners around for combat practice, sacrifices, or simple sadistic pleasure. If the family doesn't capture them themselves, they purchase them from slavers.

A single guard with keys to the cells stands duty here at all times. (See the guard house description, page 38, for stats.) Two of the six cells are currently occupied. Thariad Rivelost was purchased and brought here. His three long, terrible months of imprisonment have broken his spirit. Degar Ravenspell is a dwarf wizard who ran afoul of Aliaster Vladaam. Aliaster wanted a spell Degar had developed, but the dwarf refused to share his secrets. A week ago Aliaster kidnapped Degar and brought him here to force the information out of him.

Thariad Rivelost, male half-elf Com4: CR 3; Medium humanoid; HD 4d4-8; hp 6; Init +0; Speed 30 feet; AC 10; Attack +5 melee or +2 ranged; SV Fort –1, Ref +1, Will +1; AL CN; Str 12, Dex 11, Con 7, Int 11, Wis 11, Cha 9

Skills and Feats: Handle Animal +8, Listen +3, Ride +7, Search +1, Spot +3; Alertness, Skill Focus (Handle Animal)

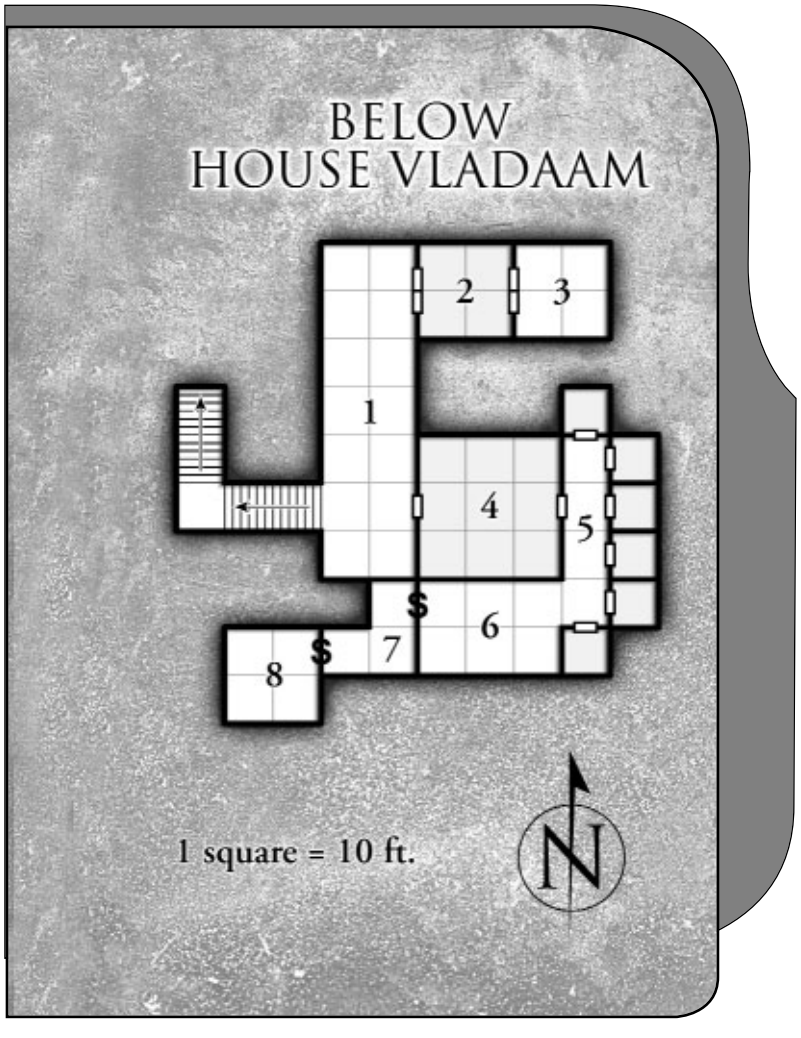
Possessions: None

Degar Ravenspell, male dwarf Wiz5: CR 5; Medium humanoid; HD 5d4+15; hp 31; Init +0; Speed 20 feet; AC 10; Attack +0 melee, or +2 ranged; SV Fort +4, Ref +1, Will +2; AL LG; Str 7, Dex 11, Con 17, Int 13, Wis 6, Cha 12
Skills and Feats: Alchemy +7, Appraise +3, Craft (stoneworking) +9, Knowledge (arcana) +6, Knowledge (history) +8; Brew Potion, Craft Wand, Craft Wondrous Item, Scribe Scroll
Possessions: None
Spells: None currently prepared

6. Torture Chamber. This place has a rack, a brazier for heating coals (and irons), and a long table covered with knives, pliers, hooks, and other implements of torture. A character needs a Search check (DC 28) to find the secret door out of this room. Navanna does everything she can to discourage or distract PCs from finding and using the secret door.

7. Secret Passage (EL 8). All characters going through this trapped passage must make saving throws against all three traps.

***Slay Living* Trap:** CR 5; victim dies; Fortitude save (DC 17) avoids, but victim still suffers 3d6+9 points of damage; Search (DC 30); Disable Device (DC 30)
***Disintegration* Trap:** CR 6; victim *disintegrated*; Fortitude save (DC 19) avoids, but victim still suffers 5d6 points of damage; Search (DC 31); Disable Device (DC 31)
***Teleportation* Trap:** CR 5; victim *teleported* into the middle of the ocean; Fortitude save (DC 17) avoids; Search (DC 30); Disable Device (DC 30)



At the western end of the passage sits a "false treasure chest" (locked, DC 28 to open) with 10,000 sp, each coin magically disguised to appear to be a platinum piece (Spot, DC 30 to notice the difference until out of this area, where the ruse becomes obvious). Behind the chest lies a well concealed secret door (Search, DC 30 to find).

8. Secret Vault. The secret door into this room is *arcane locked*. Inside waits the real treasure trove of the noble house of Vladaam. Six coffers each hold 1,000 pp, and a seventh contains 692 pp. Three small locked iron boxes (DC 30 to open) each hold 5,000 gp worth of gems. A large locked chest (DC 30 to open) holds 500 silver ingots, each worth 100 gp. Each ingot weighs 20 lbs.

Dead End

If the player characters get the key but have no intention of using it to open the Banewarrens, the flow of the adventure stops—but not permanently. Both House Vladaam and the Pactlords are very interested in obtaining the key, and they make numerous attempts to steal it back or take it by force. It should become obvious to the PCs that alone they have insufficient power to keep the key safe. Further, the key cannot be destroyed by normal means. Only the *staff of shards* can do that (*legend lore* and similar spells reveal this to be the case). For more information on the staff, see Chapter Six.

Freeing the Prisoners

Should the player characters free Thariad and Degar, they reap some good results. Degar is so grateful to the characters that, from this point on, he will make magical items to order for them. He will make up to 10,000 gp worth of items for free (one at a time, as fast as he can). After that, he'll sell them items he makes at cost. Degar is a suitable long-term ally in the city for the PCs.

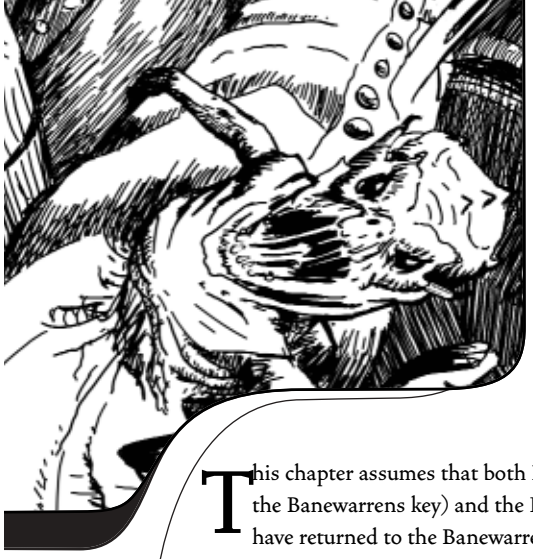
A likely outcome has the PCs giving the key to a powerful group like the Church of Lothian or the Inverted Pyramid. If they choose the Church, the key falls into the hands of Brother Heth Neferul and, thus, the Pactlords of the Quaan. This act might strongly implicate Brother Heth, and the party might choose to confront him (see Chapter Six).

If the PCs give the key to the Inverted Pyramid, Jevicca Norr tells them that her organization will keep it safe. Eventually, however, one of these events takes place:

- Grailquest Team 2 (see Chapter Five) steals the key in an ambush and uses it to get into the Banewarrens; *or*
- A member of the Inverted Pyramid allied with House Vladaam (there are many) slips away with the key and gives it to Navanna for a hefty price, paid in gold, magic, and favors to be named later.

The DM can choose which theft/betrayal occurs. The important thing is that the key ends up in the hands of someone who wants to use it.

If the PCs try to hide the key, throw it into the sea, etc., one of the groups eventually gets hold of it. It's only a matter of time—the magic at their disposal is formidable.



Chapter Five

The Outer Vaults

When the Sealed Door in Chapter Three is finally opened again, the PCs (and the NPCs) can explore the Banewarrens. The first area they find is called the Outer Vaults.

This chapter assumes that both Navanna Vladaam (with the Banewarrens key) and the Pactlords of the Quaan have returned to the Banewarrens ahead of the player characters. Other possibilities include the following:

- The PCs have the key and enter the Outer Vaults before anyone else. The Pactlords and Navanna Vladaam follow them (unbeknownst to each other).
- The PCs are right on the heels of Navanna Vladaam, who possesses and uses the key, and the Pactlords follow somewhere behind them.
- The PCs accompany Navanna Vladaam, who is still disguised as Nicalon, a Knight of the Chord. They use the key to open the Sealed Door.
- The PCs defeated or outwitted Navanna Vladaam, but the Pactlords obtained the key and got here ahead of them. This might happen if the PCs gain the key but give it to the Church of Lothian; Brother Heth gets his hands on it in that eventuality and gives it to the Pactlords. The Pactlords also could have stolen it from the PCs, the Inverted Pyramid, or anyone else who has it.

This chapter ends with the characters coming to another Sealed Door. If they have the Banewarrens key, they can open the door, in which case, refer to Chapter Eight. If Navanna has the key, she returns to the city before using it, in order to recuperate. She does not return for a week.

It is likely, however, that in either case the PCs will want to return to the city, as the Pactlords of the Quaan have kidnapped one of their number (see the event "Kidnapped!" below).

Event 1: Green Hag (EL 10)

When Kalerecent closed the Sealed Door, as described in Chapter Three, he trapped Kikanuile the green hag in the Outer Vaults without her fellow Pactlords of the Quaan. When she entered this area, she bravely pressed on by herself, heading toward Area 14, the "Frigid Trap" (where her spell resistance allowed her to avoid the trap; see below). Thus, the DM can insert an encounter with her at any time in Areas 18 or 19, for example.

Alternatively, using her *invisibility* power, she might follow the PCs, attempting to strike when they least expect it, or even waiting till they get all the way to Area 44, so she can get beyond the door. Even waiting until the PCs learn to remove the plug in Area 20 would help her. Lastly, she might actually meet up with the rest of her allies (the Grailquest Team) and join their ranks, making them even more dangerous.

Kikanuile is tall, even for her kind, and her flesh is covered in tattoos and piercings. She wears a great deal of jewelry, but all of it is worthless. She dislikes being on her own as she is now—she usually enjoys commanding her lackeys. If forced to, she will reveal the Pactlords' plans to her opponents to keep herself alive.

The thing that makes Kikanuile particularly dangerous is the fact that she still has one *wish* in her ring. The DM can use this spell in a number of ways. In her hands, the ring could transport her to Area 44, temporarily suppress the sealing magic of the Sealed Door between Area 44 and 45, steal the key away from the PCs (or Navanna), or simply make Kikanuile a more formidable opponent (she could *wish* herself back to full health, *wish* a PC into a trapped area or back to the surface, and so on). The PCs, assuming they defeat her and take this treasure, could use the ring to save themselves from some predicament or to bypass an otherwise insurmountable obstacle—such as suppressing the Sealed Door in Area 44.

Kikanuile is a variant sorcerer from the *Book of Eldritch Might II*. This means she has 2 more skill points per level than standard sorcerers and a slightly different spell list and number of known spells.

Kikanuile, Green Hag, Sor4: CR 9; Large monstrous humanoid; HD 9d8+18 + 4d6+8; hp 79; Init +0; Speed 30 feet; AC 22 (–1 size, +2 Dex, +11 natural); Attack +15 melee (1d4+4, two claws); SA Spell-like abilities, weakness, mimicry; SQ SR 18, darkvision 90 feet; SV Fort +8, Ref +11, Will +10; AL NE; Str 18, Dex 14, Con 15, Int 11, Wis 10, Cha 16

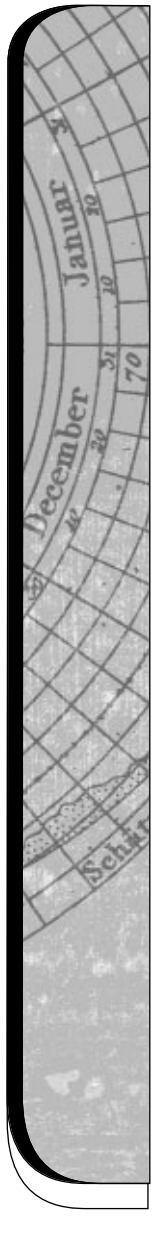
Skills and Feats: Concentration +15, Hide +9, Knowledge (arcana) +6, Listen +11, Move Silently +9, Spellcraft +7, Spot +10; Alertness, Blind-Fight, Combat Casting, Great Fortitude, Lightning Reflexes, Spell Focus (illusion)

Possessions: *Ring of one wish, bone Quaan ring, wand of lightning bolt* (5th level, nine charges), *potion of cure serious wounds*, scroll of *shield*, 54 gp

Spell-Like Abilities: At will—*change self, dancing lights, ghost sound, invisibility, pass without trace, tongues,* and *water breathing.* These abilities are as the spells cast by an 8th-level sorcerer (save DC 13 + spell level).

Weakness (Su): The green hag can weaken a foe by making a special touch attack. The victim must succeed at a Fortitude save (DC 14) or take 2d4 points of temporary Strength damage.

Mimicry (Ex): She can imitate the sounds of almost any animal.



Spells Known (6/7/4): 0—*dancing lights, detect magic, ghost sound, mage hand, ray of frost, resistance*; 1st—*chill touch, mage armor, magic missile*; 2nd—*web*

Event 2: Grailquest Team 2 (EL 11)

After Kalerecent scattered and defeated the first Grailquest Team, the Pactlords of the Quaan decided to send another team to get inside the Banewarrens. (Even though the remnants of the first Grailquest Team returned to the warrens in Chapter Three, the Pactlords felt the need to send in the additional reinforcements.) The assumption here is that Navanna Vladaam opens the Sealed Door, giving access to the Outer Vaults, and the second Grailquest Team comes in sometime afterward (but before the PCs). If this is not the case, encounters in Areas 2, 5, and elsewhere may need to be altered.

If given enough time (probably at least two weeks) with no other means to get in (meaning the Banewarrens key does not surface one way or another), the Pactlords use another *wish* to suppress the Sealed Door.

Keep in mind as well, if the PCs got the key and gave it to the Church of Lothian, Brother Heth gets his hands on it and gives it to the Pactlords. In this case, they're the ones "in the lead," with the PCs most likely following them and Navanna Vladaam skulking behind.

The Team

This team, much tougher than the previous one, consists of Yuinthu the mind flayer, an ogre mage named Ostarach, a surprisingly intelligent hieractosphinx named Wiver, and Nisslentar, an ettercap with a large monstrous spider companion. Yuinthu leads the group, but the others despise him. The Pact, however, prevents them from mutiny (see Chapter Seven for more information). While Yuinthu wants to complete the quest, he is also hungry—and thus motivated to attack the PCs to get at least one brain. Yuinthu wears long red robes with white trim.

Ostarach and Wiver are fairly chummy. Ostarach has wild, extremely long black hair and wears a green surcoat over his chain shirt. Nisslentar is stupid and easily cowed by the others. If the team needs to slow down pursuit, he and his spider remain behind to string up web barriers.

If at any time the team faces complete defeat, Yuinthu uses his *plane shift* ability to retreat to the Quaan, taking any surviving members of the team with him. If unable to escape, they all fight to the death except Wiver, who is at heart a conniving coward. He surrenders if threatened with death. When intimidated he tells his opponents all the Pactlords' goals and plans, if he believes cooperation will keep him alive.

Yuinthu, Mind Flayer: hp 49, AC 15, +8 tentacles (1d4+1, 4 attacks), mind blast, psionic abilities (*astral projection, charm monster, detect thoughts, levitate, plane shift* and *suggestion*), improved grab; see MM, page 136
Possessions: *Ring of minor electricity resistance, bone Quaan ring*, two *potions of mage armor*

Ostarach, Ogre-Mage: hp 38, AC 20, +8 greatsword (2d6+6), 10-foot reach, spell-like abilities (*darkness* and *invisibility* at will, *charm person, cone of cold, gaseous form, polymorph self,* and *sleep* 1x/day), regeneration 2, SR 18; see MM, page 144
Possessions: *+1 greatsword*, *+1 large steel shield*, *bone Quaan ring*, chain shirt, 255 gp

Wiver, Hieractosphinx: hp 66, AC 19, +14 bite (1d10+6) and +9 claws (1d6+3, two attacks), pounce, rake (1d6+3); see MM, page 170
Possessions: *+2 bracers of strength, bone Quaan ring,* key to the chest in his room (see Chapter Seven)

Nisslentar, Ettercap: hp 30, AC 14, +3 bite (1d8 and poison) and +1 claws (1d3, two attacks), webs; see MM, page 88

Monstrous Spider, Large: hp 25, AC 14, +4 bite (1d8+3 and poison), webs, vermin qualities; see MM, page 210

Staging This Encounter

Reminder: If Navanna discovered the Pactlords' involvement in the opening of the Banewarrens, her spies might identify for her the group's Ptolus headquarters in the Chapel of St. Thessina. In that event, she may leave a note designed to lure the PCs to the Chapel, as described in "A Diversion" in Chapter Six (see page 62). They find her planted note when they first encounter the Pactlords in this chapter.

When the team entered the Outer Vaults, they positioned two of their members, the gnoll ranger Erzak and his dire ape, in Area 2 to attack anyone coming in after them. Then the team proceeded toward Area 5 and beyond. Because from there they can head toward Areas 8 to 11 or around through Area 13, the PCs can encounter them almost anywhere.

An Ambush

As mentioned above, Yuinthu the mind flayer is eager to ambush the PCs. An interesting place for this encounter is Area 13. In this case, Yuinthu drinks one of his *mage armor* potions (AC 19), then Ostarach makes everyone *invisible* and flies near the ceiling; the mind flayer levitates to the ceiling, but stays at least 30 feet away from the ogre-mage. The rest wait near the middle of the room. When the PCs enter, Ostarach blasts them with a *cone of cold,* and Yuinthu mind blasts. Then the others move in to attack. They attempt to "save" one of the characters for Yuinthu, who will *charm* a victim before attempting a grapple to extract the character's brain.

Hear a Fight

The PCs hear a fight in progress ahead of them in the dungeon. This, for example, might occur in Area 8, where the

team would be fighting a golem. If this happens, assume Yuinthu drank a potion already (AC 19), and that the fight has just begun. The team is assaulting the golem physically. Since Yuinthu becomes so powerless against the golem, he stands watch, and thus likely becomes aware of any player character who even comes close. The golem attacks whoever is nearest, so the Grailquest Team pulls back if the PCs show up, letting the construct attack them instead. If given the opportunity, the Pactlords try to make the player characters waste resources and energy fighting the golem, not them. Smart maneuvering on the PCs' part allows them to accomplish the same thing, though—forcing the Pactlords to fight the golem, and then attacking the victor.

Event 3: Navanna Vladaam (CR 11)

Presumably, Navanna Vladaam is prowling the Banewarrens now also. Unlike the Pactlords, however, she does not want any confrontations with anyone. She wants to get through the Banewarrens as quickly as possible, accompanied by two of her urban werewolf agents. When she goes to Area 20 and realizes she can go no farther, she waits, hiding in a convenient place—such as Area 19 or the secret passage between Areas 19 and 20. If she has to wait too long, she goes back up to the city to ask her brother for help or advice. Should the PCs leave before getting through Area 20, when they return, they find the plug moved (through use of the mechanism in Area 13).

#3

Show the players illustration #3. No matter what, Navanna returns to the city before she opens the way to the Inner Vaults area (see Chapter Eight).

If she is not in possession of the key, she attempts to steal it from whoever does have it.

Navanna Vladaam: See Chapter Four, page 35.

Urban Werewolves: See Chapter Four, page 37.

Event 4: Kidnapped!

This event happens toward the end of the PCs' exploration of the Outer Vaults. By this time, the characters have tangled with the second Grailquest Team, and the Pactlords are eager to get rid of them. They choose to employ a strategy designed to draw the PCs back up to the city. Since the victim will be put into the *probe of dreams* (see Area 18 in Chapter Six), they will not choose an elf as a kidnap victim unless they have no other choice.

New Magic Item

Ring of the true phase: *This ring, when worn by a phase spider, transforms its* ethereal jaunt *power into an* etherealness *power, effectively allowing the creature to take up to five other creatures with it.*

Caster Level: *15;* Prerequisites: *Forge Ring,* etherealness; Market Price: *20,000 gp*

Vo-Nul the phase spider is a Pactlord of the Quaan and serves as a means of transport for his allies. Vo-Nul wears a special magical ring that transforms a phase spider's *ethereal jaunt* ability into an *etherealness* ability. He uses it in this scenario to take himself and a Pactslave dwarf named Norsu into the Banewarrens, where they track down the PCs ethereally. (For more information on Norsu, see Chapter Six, Area 7.) When the moment presents itself, they appear near a single character. Vo-Nul makes a touch attack, stealing the character away to the Ethereal Plane if successful. Meanwhile, Norsu drops a threatening note that reads:

If you ever want to see your comrade alive again, you will leave the Banewarrens. We will contact you again once you are out. Do as we demand, or your friend dies a slow, agonizing death.

Once on the Ethereal Plane, Norsu and Vo-Nul attempt to subdue their captive. After they do, they take the character to the Chapel of St. Thessina (see Chapter Six). Norsu remains there, but Vo-Nul is not seen again until Chapter Ten.

Norsu Goldenvein, female dwarf Ftr4: CR 4; Medium humanoid; HD 4d10+16; hp 49; Init +4; Speed 15 feet; AC 15 (+5 armor); Attack +9 melee (2d6+7, greatsword), or +4 ranged (1d6, light crossbow); SV Fort +8, Ref +1, Will +2; AL N; Str 17, Dex 11, Con 18, Int 13, Wis 13, Cha 13

Skills and Feats: Appraise +3, Craft (stonecarving) +7, Handle Animal +5, Jump +3, Listen +3, Search +3, Spot +3, Swim +6; Alertness, Improved Initiative, Power Attack, Weapon Focus (greatsword), Weapon Specialization (greatsword)

Possessions: *+1 greatsword*, masterwork breastplate, light crossbow, 12 bolts, dagger, *potion of haste,* gold ring worth 75 gp

Vo-Nul, Phase Spider: hp 59, AC 17, +7 bite (1d6+4 and poison), etherealness; see MM, page 150

Possessions: *Ring of the true phase, bracers of armor +2, bone Quaan ring*

Event 5: Time Passes

With several groups exploring the vaults, things should remain fairly dynamic. The player characters should encounter opened doors, sprung traps, slain or wounded guardians, and so on. More importantly, if they leave an area and return, they should find things changed. Some suggestions include the following:

1. The PCs find the golem in Area 8 destroyed (by the Pactlords of the Quaan). The guardian lies in chopped-up pieces..
2. Geristranomos, Danar's magical construct assistant in Area 16, reports that a woman (Navanna) accompanied by a pair of large furry creatures questioned him, promising to free him, and then left him here.

3. The plug in Area 20 shows marks that someone attempted to pry it up and/or smash through it.
4. The secret door in Area 35 hangs open, and the girallons from Area 37 patrol around it.
5. The doors to Areas 29, 39, and 40 have been opened (either forced by the Pactlords or finessed open by Navanna). The *lich's hand* is gone from Area 39, now in the keeping of Navanna herself or Ostarach the ogre-mage.

Passing Through the Broken Seal Area

To get to the Outer Vaults, the PCs have to retrace their steps and go back through the meandering passage (Chapter Two), past the umber hulk lair, and through the Broken Seal Area (Chapter Three). When the PCs return to the Broken Seal Area, Kalerecent is probably dead, slain either by the Pactlords' Grailquest Team 2 coming to secure the area, or at the hands of Navanna and her agents if the characters are not with her.

Should the PCs be the first to arrive with the Banewarrens key, Kalerecent is probably still alive. He will not explore with them, however; he maintains his vigil and watches their backs.

Key to the Outer Vaults

The "Outer Vaults" are much larger and older than the area described in Chapter Three. Danar used these vaults extensively. As Eslathagos Malkith, he actually came here (unlike the Sealed Door Area), although he still did not devote much attention to the place. This chapter details sections left relatively untouched since Danar used them to store banes. (The DM can expand the Outer Vaults, if desired, making this detailed area potentially only one eastern section.)

1. Entry

This 20-by-30-foot chamber has the reinforced masonry walls of the chambers to the east. The staircase ahead leading up appears somehow newer, although still very old. To either side of the stairs, the walls bear a relief. On the right side, the relief shows a tall man in a halo and long robes, with his hands extended in a gesture of blessing. The left side depicts a winged horse rearing. Both reliefs have suffered greatly—they're now heavily cracked and chipped.

If Erzak is in Area 2, he has cast an *alarm* spell in this area that will silently warn him of intruders.

The eastern door in this chamber is the Sealed Door described in Area 7 of Chapter Three. The reliefs show Danar and his pegasus, Voastra.

The stairs are indeed newer than the other sections of the warrens, the result of reconstruction after the geological event that forced everything upward.

2. The Room of Stairs (EL 7)

The floor of this long chamber features a blue mosaic. However, as in most of the areas you have seen in these warrens, the floor is broken and uneven, obscuring the image. Four staircases extend out of this room—three leading up and one leading down—as does an angled passageway. Bronze torch sconces hang on the plaster-covered walls.

The mosaic once showed a scene of rolling waves and golden ships. A character who makes a Search check or Craft (stonework) check with a DC of 20 can determine this.

Creatures

Assuming the Pactlords are ahead of the PCs, they have positioned a gnoll ranger named Erzak and his dire ape companion to drive off anyone coming in. If not, the room is empty, and Erzak and his ape are encountered later.

Erzak was created using the downloadable alternate ranger class found in the archives of "The Stuff" column at <www.montecook.com>.

Erzak, male gnoll Rgr5: CR 6; Medium humanoid; HD 2d8+4 + 5d8+10; hp 37; Init +3; Speed 30 feet; AC 17 (+3 Dex, +3 armor, +1 natural); Attack +12/+7 melee (2d6+7 greataxe), or +12/+7 or +10/+5/+10 ranged (1d8+7 within 30 feet); SA Favored enemy +2 (humans), favored enemy +1 (dwarves); SV Fort +9, Ref +7, Will +4; AL CE; Str 20, Dex 16, Con 14, Int 12, Wis 12, Cha 10

Skills and Feats: Hide +13, Intuit Direction +4, Listen +6, Move Silently +12, Ride +6, Search +8, Spot +8, Swim +7, Wilderness Lore +11; Favored Enemy Strike, Point Blank Shot, Precise Shot, Rapid Shot, Track, Weapon Focus (longbow)

Possessions: *+1 mighty longbow* (Str 20), two quivers, 40 arrows, masterwork studded leather armor, masterwork greataxe, newssheet (see below), *bone Quaan ring*

Spells (1): 1st—*alarm*

Dire Ape: hp 39, AC 15, +8 claws (1d6+6, two attacks), +3 bite (1d8+3), rend (2d6+12), scent; see MM, page 57

Tactics

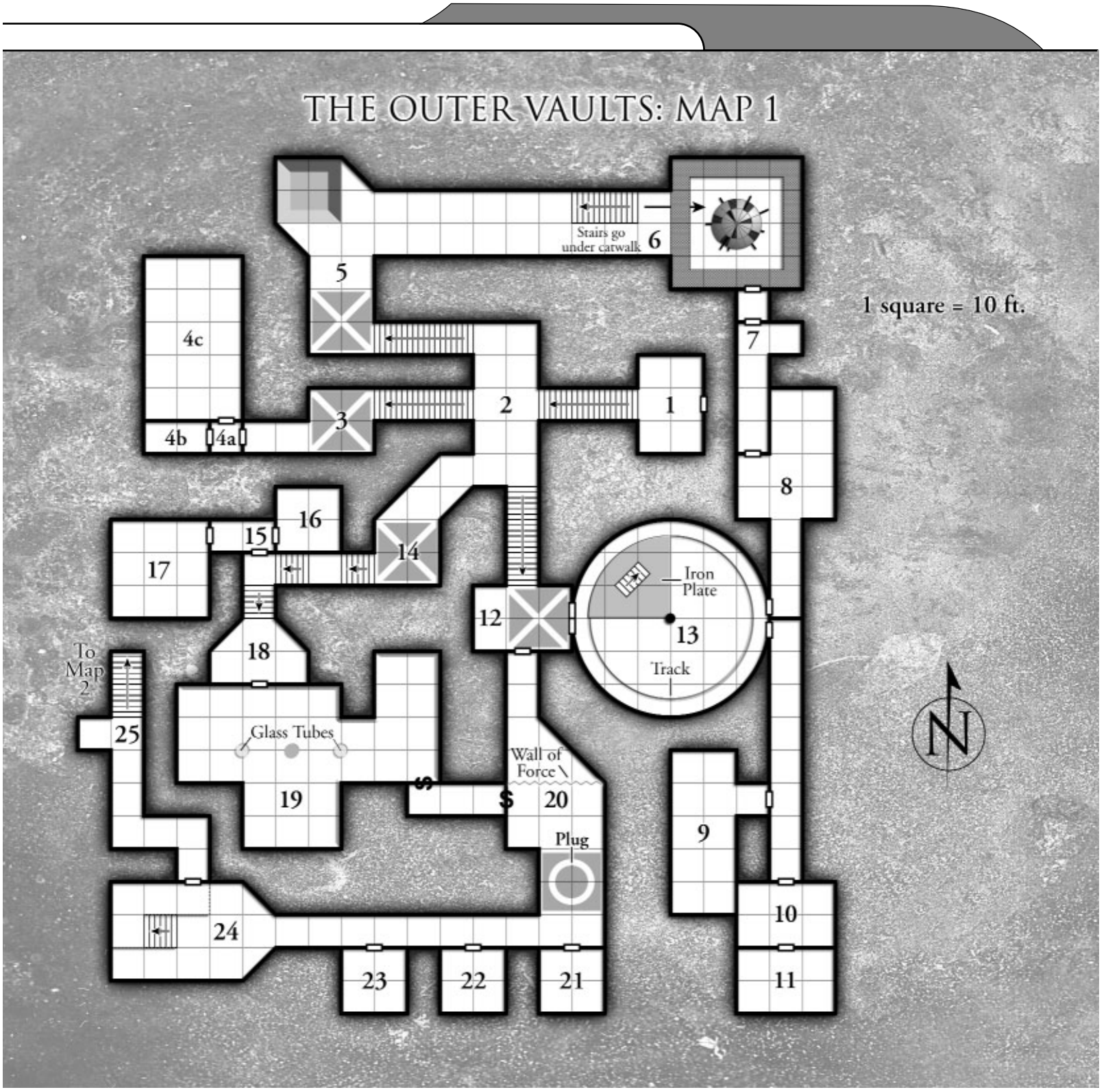
Erzak is an overconfident, murderous lout. A consummate hunter, he waits with the ape in ambush and springs out, hoping to gain surprise. He lets the ape rush up and attack while he uses his bow, laughing and jeering at his foes. If he has to, he pulls back up the stairs (any of the three sets leading up). He doesn't actually care overmuch for the dire ape's safety.

Treasure

Erzak has a copy of a Ptolus newssheet (like a newspaper) from a few days ago; it discusses the events surrounding Tavan Zith's appearance (see Chapter One). While not "treasure," this item shows Erzak is not just some random "dungeon monster."

3. Trap (EL 4)

The 20-foot-square area at the top of the stairs in the center of Area 2's western wall is a special pit trap. When at least 100 lbs. rests upon the marked area, the floor parts in two. The halves open like doors, dumping all in the area down 20 feet to a slanted floor, which rolls the victims down a chute that leads 20 more feet west into a bed of horrible spikes.



Once they fall down the chute, its slanted floor slams up to a vertical position, sealing off the chute from the main shaft of the pit as a secret door (Search, DC 20). The pit continues down another 10 feet past the now-upright slanted floor/wall to a flat floor that shimmers in the light (it's a plate of multifaceted glass). A *magic mouth*, hidden near the bottom of the pit, makes a "zap" sound. The glass plate on the floor is treated with *Nystul's magic aura* to give it the appearance of a teleporter. The characters, meanwhile, have slid down the chute on the other side of the new secret door, landing in the spikes and out of sight.

The whole idea behind this trap is that victims fall down and are shunted to the chute, which then closes behind them. Anyone remaining above hears the "zap" sound. When they look down, they see the shimmering, magical plate at the bottom of the shaft, and no evidence of the chute at all. They are supposed to believe that the victims have been teleported away. Thus, rather than helping their possibly living companions, they go somewhere else.

The door closing off the chute locks (DC 25 to open). It is stone with a hardness 10, 60 hit points, and a Break DC of 28.

Pit Trap with Chute and Spikes: CR 4; fall 20 feet, roll down 20 feet (2d6+1d6) into spikes (+10 melee, 1d4+1 spike attacks for 1d4+2 points of damage per successful hit; Reflex save (DC 20) negates; Search (DC 20); Disable Device (DC 20)

4. Complex Vault (EL varies)

The eastern door into the area marked 4A is a steel, locked Vault Door (DC 25 to open; see "Banewarrens Specifics" in the Introduction for details).

The door between Areas 4A and 4B is a locked steel door (DC 25 to open). It has two traps. When it opens, a volley of six arrows fires from the wall in 4B opposite the door, and a portcullis drops halfway across Area 4B, blocking off the far wall. The portcullis has a hardness of 10, 60 hit points, and a DC of 25 to either lift it or break it.

Arrow Trap: CR 3; six arrows +10 attack, 1d8 points of damage each; Search (DC 20); Disable Device (DC 22)

Portcullis Trap: CR 1/2; Search (DC 25); Disable Device (DC 25)

The far wall hides a secret compartment (Search, DC 20), behind which is the lever that opens the door between Areas 4A and 4C. However, it is also trapped. Anyone opening the compartment (it slides to the left) must make a Fortitude save or become permanently paralyzed.

Paralysis Trap: CR 3; paralysis (Fortitude save [DC 17] negates); Search (DC 23); Disable Device (DC 23)

The door between 4A and 4C will open only if someone activates the lever in 4B.

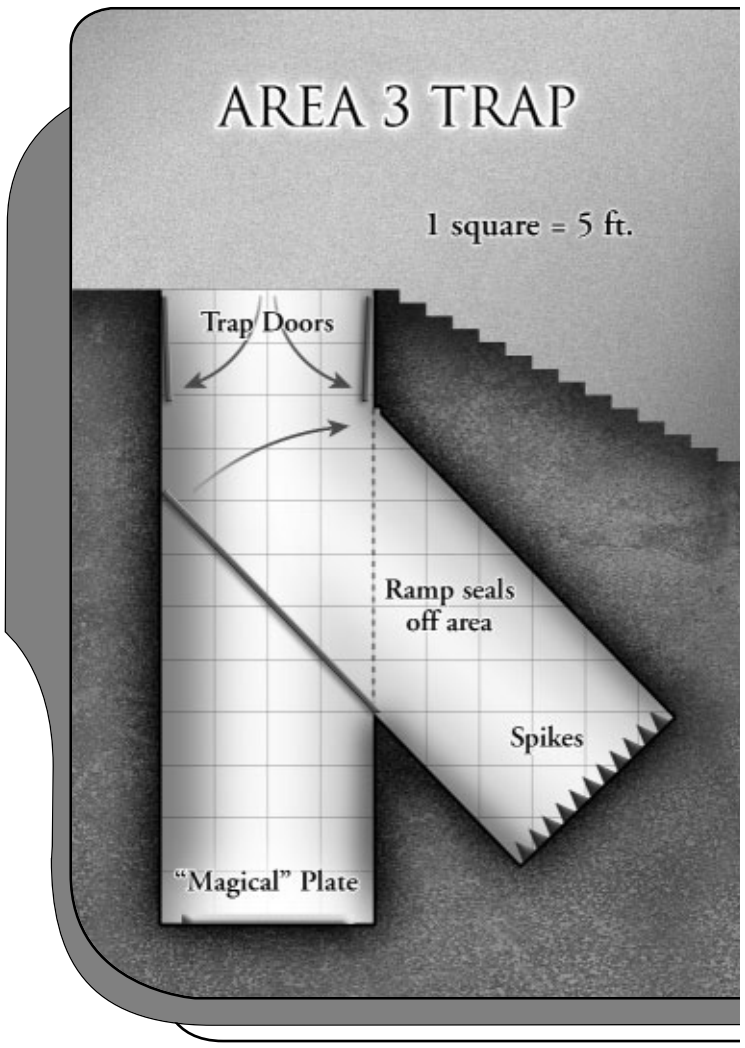
A rusted iron platform mounted on four massive stone pillars dominates this room. Two iron ramps lead up to the top of the 25-foot-high platform. Eight cocoonlike pods hang from strands below the platform. Their outer coatings look brown and dry. A few pieces of the stuff have flaked off and lie on the floor below the pods. The ceiling here is at least 35 feet high.

The cocoons are osyluth pods, a special creation of the devils within them. These fiends, called dread osyluths, are just like normal osyluth devils except that, when one is slain, two more dread osyluths are summoned from hell to take its place. Thus, in short order, unwary foes can accidentally find themselves swarmed with far more of the creatures than they could ever handle.

If the traps guarding this vault didn't convince the PCs that randomly poking around in Banewarrens vaults isn't a good idea, the dread osyluths will.

The Osyluth Pods

Each pod has a hardness of 1, 20 hit points, and a Break DC of 20. If the vault is breached, the osyluths begin to stir. Each of the eight creatures makes a Spot check (+12). All



that get over 25 on these checks begin to squirm and move to get out of their cocoons in the first round, making Strength checks to break free (+5 Strength). On the third round, an osyluth that isn't already stirring may attempt another Spot check (DC 20) to try to break free.

An osyluth that breaks out of a pod pauses, hanging upside down from what remains of its cocoon, to assess the situation. Then, it uses its spell-like *fly* ability to swoop down and attack. If the PCs flee, the osyluths do not follow—they teleport away.

#5

Show the players illustration #5.

Dread Osyluth (8+): hp 32 each, AC 17, +9 bite (1d8+5), +4 claws (1d4+2, two attacks), +4 sting (3d4+2 and poison), 10-foot reach, DR 10/+1, SR 22, spell-like abilities; see MM, page 48

5. Trap (EL 6)

The 20-foot-square area at the top of the northernmost set of stairs out of Area 2 is a special trap. When at least 100 lbs. rests upon floor of the marked area, a 20-foot wide stone wall drops down from the ceiling along the north edge of the marked area, and a 10-foot wide stone wall drops down to the east, blocking the stairs. This effectively seals anyone inside in a 20-foot cube. Those within can make Reflex saving throws (DC 22) to leap out of the trap area before the walls slam down. This cube moves (magically via extremely powerful *telekinesis*) to the pit in the room's northwest corner. The pit is 100 feet deep, and the cube (and its contents) drop quickly. The cube smashes to bits at the bottom of the pit. Those inside suffer 10d6 points of damage from the fall and another 3d6 points of secondary damage from the bits of shattered stone (Reflex save, DC 16 for half of the secondary damage).

The trap cube moves to the pit in 3 rounds. The walls are 2 inches thick with a hardness of 10, 30 hit points, and a Break DC of 27.

The stone walls, floor, and ceiling of the trap area push out to become flush with the surrounding stone after 3 rounds. The droppable walls in the ceiling reset after 3 rounds as well. The trap can function a total of three more times before there are no more stone walls, floors, and ceilings to make new cubes.

The fact that the floor here is unbroken and smooth makes this trap fairly easy to find if anyone is looking, since in most places here the stone floors are broken and uneven.

Stone Cube Trap: CR 6; 10d6 points of falling damage plus 3d6 points of secondary damage (Reflex save [DC 16] halves); Reflex save (DC 22) negates; Search (DC 16); Disable Device (DC 24)

If the PCs avoid the trap, they find the pit empty at the bottom, unless the Pactlords are ahead of the group. In that case, whether the PCs avoid it or not, one of the functions of the trap has been triggered, and the pit already holds a pile of shattered stone and a dead orc. The orc was obviously killed only recently; it requires three successful Strength checks (DC 18) to fully uncover him from the rubble. The orc has the following intact equipment and treasure: a masterwork scimitar, a *+1 large steel shield*, a *bone Quaan ring*, 34 gp, and a gold earring worth 50 gp.

6. The Warding Sanctuary

Stairs from the west lead to the lower of this chamber's two levels. At the bottom, a huge metal device that looks like an iron tower topped with a copper sphere rises up at least 30 feet high. Around this strange sphere, an iron catwalk made of a crosshatched grating follows the wall, forming the upper level about 25 feet above the lower one.

The central tower is cylindrical with a 10-foot diameter. A number of jointed metallic extensions, like the legs of an insect, extend from the tower and connect to the ground or simply jut out into the air at all angles. The top sphere looks about 15 feet across—half the structure's height. A series of curved plates comprising its copper skin fit together carefully; each one bears a single arcane rune etched into its surface. A few carry images of copper dragons.

The top level has a door in the south wall.

#1

Show the players illustration #1. The towerlike device is a *warding generator*—a powerful magical item Danar built to maintain the magical wards that seal the Banewarrens. A character making a Knowledge (arcana) check (DC 20) can identify this structure for what it is, and a Knowledge (arcana) check (DC 25) uncovers the exact connection between this device and the Sealed Doors. This device is obviously similar to the one in Chapter Three, Area 6, but it currently functions.

The *generator* has a total of 1,000 hit points, hardness 10, and a Break DC of 60. If anyone deals more than 100 points of damage to the *generator*, a flare of magical energy inflicts 5d6 points of force damage to anyone within 50 feet of it (Reflex saving throw [DC 20] halves). If it suffers another 100 points of damage, there is another identical flare of energy, and the *generator* stops working. Should this occur, even the *sealing rod* (see Chapter Nine, Area 24) cannot reseal the Outer Vaults without someone first repairing this *generator*. The parts and tools needed for such repairs are in the first Sealed Door Area, Area 9 (see Chapter Three), along with information on the difficulty of the repairs and the time required to make them.

7. Magical Spear Trap (EL 3)

Reminder: This area might show the PCs how "Time Passes," as described in Event 5.

To the east, the back wall of a 10-foot-wide alcove bears a relief of three plate-armored warriors. They each hold shields in one hand and raise the other hand above their

heads, as if to throw something. However, they appear to hold sparkling gems in those hands—are they going to throw gems at their foes?

The gems in the alcove to the east launch spears of force energy at anyone standing to the west (in front of the door, whether the door is open or not). These spears are magically guided, and the trigger is magical. As long as anyone is in the area (or crosses through it), a spear fires from each intact gem once per round (so the trap might shoot a maximum of three per round if all three gems remain in the wall). The spears fire only at creatures, not objects, and they dissipate after 1 round. If the PCs manage to disable the trap, they can remove the gems, destroying the trap forever. Each is a large amethyst worth 250 gp.

Magical Spear Trap: CR 3; +10 ranged attack (1d8+4 points of damage), up to three spears per round; Search (DC 28); Disable Device (DC 28)

8. Berserk Guardian (EL 7)

Reminder: This is a potential area to show how "Time Passes," as described in Event 5, or for the PCs to encounter Grailquest Team 2, as described in Event 2.

This chamber smells nauseating: a horrible, ancient rotting stench. You hear a strange gurgling growl and suddenly a towering beast lurches forward. It has a bearlike head and appears to be made of pieces of animals roughly stitched together. Patches of fur hang from the old, decaying flesh more in mockery of a bear than truly resembling one.

Danar considered flesh golems using human parts disgusting and evil. So, experimenting, he made a flesh golem from the parts of bears. However, when he died, the flesh golem went berserk. Now it attacks anything it comes across.

As it lingers around the north portion of the room, PCs coming in from the north need to make Spot checks to avoid being surprised by the golem. If they come from the south, roll initiative normally.

The bear golem has claws rather than slams, but its jaw no longer functions to bite (it has rotted away).

Bear (Flesh) Golem: 55 hp, AC 18, +10 claws (2d8+5, two attacks), 10-foot reach, construct qualities, immune to magic, DR 15/+1, see MM, page 108

9. Scorpion Constructs (EL 7)

The door into this chamber is locked. It opens only when the door to Area 10 opens.

Dozens of small metallic scorpions lie like clockwork toys about the floor of this otherwise empty chamber.

Although at one time this swarm numbered 50, now only four Small monstrous scorpion constructs still function. They wait here for the door to open. When it does, they immediately move out of the room and head south to attack any living creatures they can find.

Those that do not function simply broke down. Each one is worth about 10 gp as a curiosity to an interested buyer. They cannot be repaired, however. Still, a character who succeeds at a Profession (engineering) check (DC 25) can disassemble the scorpions to produce enough parts to assemble a single working Small monstrous scorpion construct (saving the builder 5,000 gp!).

Small Monstrous Scorpion Constructs (4): CR 3‡; Small construct; HD 1d10; hp 5, 6, 7, 10; Init –2; Speed 20 feet; AC 24 (–2 Dex, +1 size, +15 natural); Attack +5 melee (1d3+4, two claws) +0 melee (1d3+2 and poison sting); SA Poison sting (DC 11, 1d3 temporary Strength), casts *slow* as a free action every 2 rounds with a range of 10 feet and a duration of 7 rounds, improved grab, squeeze; SQ Construct; SV Fort +2, Ref –2, Will –1; AL N; Str 19, Dex 6, Con —, Int —, Wis 8, Cha 1

‡ The CR for these monstrous constructs has been adjusted slightly to fairly reflect their abilities and weaknesses.

10. Large Scorpion Construct (EL 6)

The door into this room from the north is locked (DC 25 to open).

With a clank and a whir, a scorpion-shaped monstrosity of metal lurches forward!

The "scorpion" is 5 feet wide and 10 feet long. It seems to guard a door covered in engraved runic symbols and sealed with glistening metal.

This construct attacks immediately. At the same time, if it is not already open, the door to Area 9 opens, and the constructs within move around to attack, trapping the intruders in a "pincer move."

Large Monstrous Scorpion Construct: CR 6‡; Large construct; HD 4d10; hp 25; Init –2; Speed 20 feet; AC 24 (–2 Dex, –1 size, +17 natural); Attack +10 melee (1d6+8, two claws) +5 melee (1d6+4 and poison sting); SA Poison sting (DC 16, 1d6 temporary Strength), breath weapon usable every 1d4 rounds up to five times per day (petrification, DC 17, 60-foot cone), improved grab, squeeze; SQ Construct; SV Fort +4, Ref +0, Will +0; AL N; Str 27, Dex 6, Con —, Int —, Wis 8, Cha 1

‡ The CR for this monstrous construct has been adjusted slightly to fairly reflect its abilities and weaknesses.

11. Minor Weapon Vault

Reminder: In this area, the player characters might encounter the Pactlords' Grailquest Team 2, as described in Event 2.

The door into this room is a Vault Door. (For details, see "Banewarrens Specifics" in the Introduction.)

This chamber appears to be an armory of various melee weapons, but it seems to hold only weapons with dreadful appearances. Within steel, glass-fronted display cases rest swords, axes, and maces, each with bat wings as hilt-guards, snakes as hilts or handles, demonic faces leering from pommels or heads, and various symbols of evil etched into blades and other surfaces. These cases hang on the walls, dimly lit from within by a dark blue glow.

Cast upon this vault is a *forbiddance* spell keyed to alignment. The caster's alignment was lawful good. The spell DC is 19.

The Cases

Ten cases hang on the walls in this weapon vault. Each has a hardness of 10, 25 hit points, and a Break DC of 25, whether the character tries to break through the glass or the metal portion of the case.

Each case is permanently sealed and, if opened, releases a blast of holy energy that inflicts 4d6 points of damage to any evil character within 5 feet of the case—2d6 points of damage if the character is neither good nor evil. Good characters are aware of the blast but suffer no harm. There is no saving throw.

Holy Blast Trap: CR 2; 4d6 points of damage to evil, 2d6 points of damage to nongood, non-evil, no saving throw; Search 31; Disable Device 31 (Award XP for a CR 2 challenge only if this trap can harm the characters.)

The Weapons

All the weapons here have an evil alignment. In the hands of a non-evil wielder, they inflict 1 negative level (which goes away as soon as the character drops the weapon). The weapons include:

- *+1 battle axe*
- *+1 greatsword*
- *+1 longsword*
- *+1 heavy mace*
- *+1 bane (good outsiders) short sword*
- *+1 dagger of venom*
- *+1 bastard sword*
- *+1 assassin's dagger*
- *+1 greataxe*
- *+1 unholy light mace*

12. Broken Trap

The floor of this chamber seems particularly uneven and broken. The easternmost two-thirds of the floor, in front of a pair of large double doors, is split by an obvious seam running through the middle—as if the floor were a large trap door above some dark area beneath. The double doors bear the etched traceries of a delicate, pastoral scene with a pegasus flying high above some trees. An iron rod, as if to hold a curtain or tapestry, hangs high on the western wall, but any curtain or tapestry is long gone.

The marked area on the map is indeed a pit trap, but the geological upheaval rendered it inoperable and it was never adequately repaired. Thus, only through great effort (Strength check, DC 22) will the trap doors open. Beneath it lies a pit, 50 feet deep and lined with spikes. (If someone does indeed fall, the victim suffers not only 5d6 points of damage from the fall, but 1d4+1 attacks from the spikes, each having a +10 bonus and inflicting 1d8+1 points of damage.

13. Plug Controls (EL 7)

Reminder: In this area, the player characters might encounter the Pactlords' Grailquest Team 2, as described in Event 2.

All doors into this circular room are locked (DC 25 to open).

An iron pillar rises from floor to ceiling in this round chamber, which looks about 60 feet in diameter. A metal track set into the stone floor runs all around the circumference of the room. A flat iron plate, like a pie-shaped wedge equal to about a quarter of the room's area, covers the northwest portion of the floor; the plate is attached to the pillar in the center and to the track. A set of iron stairs 5 feet wide runs up to a 5-foot-square hole in the ceiling.

The ceiling appears to have a track similar to the one on the floor. It is also fitted with an iron plate attached to the pillar. This plate covers about three quarters of the ceiling's surface—everything but a pie-shaped wedge directly over the floor plate.

The iron is rusted and pitted in places, showing its age.

The stairs lead up to a 10-foot-square room with a large lever on one wall. The lever is pushed all the way to the right.

The Pillar

Characters can find four switches on the iron pillar in the middle of the room. These magically activate a mechanism that causes the pillar to rotate, along with the floor and ceiling plates. Each switch causes the mechanism to move so that the floor plate covers a different quarter of the floor and the ceiling to uncover a different quarter of the ceiling. When the mechanism stops in a selected location, the stairway here matches up with a new 5-foot-square opening in

the ceiling. Each opening gives access to a different 10-foot-square chamber with a lever on one wall.

The switches, from top to bottom, select the following positions: 1. NW (the current position); 2. NE; 3. SW; 4. SE.

The mechanism moves across one-quarter of the room in a round. Anyone standing on the moving floor who does not hold onto the stairs or something equally solid must make a Balance check (DC 20) or fall down.

The Lever Rooms

When the levers in all four overhead rooms are pushed to the left, the plug in Area 20 rises to give access to the rest of the Outer Vaults. However, to keep unauthorized intruders from using this entry, the levers are trapped and useless unless activated in a particular order. Anyone entering one of the 10-foot-square lever rooms in the improper order must make a Fortitude saving throw (DC 20) or suffer 3d6 points of sonic damage from a burst of sound. The same burst magically teleports victims to the top of the pit in Area 5, so they fall 100 feet (10d6 points of damage) unless they make a successful Reflex saving throw (DC 25) and grab onto the side.

In any case, the levers cannot be activated out of order. The proper order is: SW, NE, SE, and NW. Of course, the PCs can use trial and error to figure this out, but that is very dangerous. The best way to learn the proper order is from Geristranomos, Danar's magical construct assistant in Area 16.

Sonic Teleporter Trap: CR 7; 3d6 points of sonic damage, teleport over pit (10d6 points of falling damage); Fortitude save (DC 20) negates; Search (DC 31); Disable Device (DC 31)

14. Frigid Trap (EL 5)

The north end of this area is a slanted, 15-foot-wide passage running northeast to southwest. In the south end of the chamber, a staircase leads up and to the west.

The 20-foot square marked on the map is freezing cold. Each round (or partial round) spent in the area inflicts 4d8 points of cold damage (no save), and those suffering damage must make a Fortitude saving throw (DC 15) or freeze solid permanently. While frozen, the creature remains alive and suffers no further cold damage but cannot take actions of any sort. Inflicting 20 points of fire damage to a frozen character frees a victim from the ice (but the character suffers the fire damage).

Freezing Trap: CR 5; 4d8 points of cold damage (no save) and victims freeze solid; Fortitude save (DC 15) negates freezing; Search (DC 29); Disable (DC 29)

15. Gas Trap (EL 7)

This short hallway runs east and west, with a door at both ends and a door on the eastern end of the south wall as well.

All the doors in this hallway slam shut unless physically held open. If at any time all three doors are closed and there is at least 100 lbs. of weight on the floor, the doors all lock (DC 25 to open) and poison gas (burnt othur fumes) fills the hallway.

Poison Gas Trap: CR 5; 1 point of permanent Constitution drain/3d6 points of temporary Constitution damage; Fortitude save (DC 18) resists; Search (DC 21); Disable Device (DC 21)

16. Danar's Assistant

Reminder: This area can show the PCs how "Time Passes," as described in Event 5.

This room is full of iron drum barrels, most of which have toppled. A humanoid figure made of metal lies trapped under a pile of the barrels. It appears to be about 6 feet tall and quite lithe. Its brass parts look tarnished and corroded and its left leg is mangled. It raises its head, one eye socket missing its eye, and looks up at you.

The creature is Geristranomos, a magical construct Danar created. Geristranomos is a free-thinking creature, animated not by ordinary magic but by soul magic. It has been trapped in this chamber since Danar became the Dread One. His left leg is horribly mangled from the fallen barrels, and only one of his eye sockets has an eye (which is actually a 500 gp diamond). The other eye lies on the floor, hidden among the contents of the room (Search DC 19 to find it).

Trapped here for so long, Geristranomos has gone a little mad. He is not hostile and, in fact, thanks anyone who helps free him profusely. Then he begins to go on and on about all the duties he has neglected. "I must attend to the locks, and clean all of the mechanisms. Why, I'm sure the iron plates in the Plug Control Room are a terrible mess."

Of course, he can't do any of these things because his leg is destroyed.

PCs wishing to speak with Geristranomos can learn much about the Banewarrens from him, assuming that they can get him to speak coherently. To do so requires a Diplomacy check—one per question asked, with no successful retries possible. Alternatively (or additionally) the characters can do something kind for Geristranomos, including using a Profession (engineering), Craft (metalworking), or similar skill (DC 25) to repair his leg; sacrificing a gem of at least 100 gp value for his missing eye; or even offering to carry him up to the surface and give him to someone who can really help (such as the Inverted Pyramid). Each time they do one of these acts, he offers a bit of important knowledge amid his rambling.

Geristranomos' knowledge includes these important facts:

- When they were created, the Sealed Doors could be opened only by Danar's own touch.
- The Banewarrens are divided into the Outer Vaults, the Inner Vaults, and the Baneheart.
- The Inner Vaults and the Baneheart were corrupted when Danar fell. Now they are evil places. The only evil in the Outer Vaults comes from the long-term residual effects of being near so many banes.
- The Inner Vaults and the Baneheart were the domain of a number of the Dread One's evil lieutenants. Some of them might still be around. The worst of them is the Malificite, who was once an angel.
- Only the *sealing rod* can reseal a Sealed Door once it comes unsealed. Danar used to carry the rod with him at all times. Now it lies within the Baneheart.
- The Dread One fell in battle against powerful heroes below Jabel Shammar, the fortress atop the Spire.
- *Warding generators* provide arcane power to the Sealed Doors. No amount of magic can breach or bypass the doors or walls of an area enclosed by Sealed Doors.
- After Danar had collected a number of banes and placed them in the warrens, a terrible geological event pushed the earth upward, creating the Spire. Although Danar's superior construction allowed most of the warrens to remain intact, new areas—mostly stairways—had to be added to connect the separated and severed areas.
- The correct order for activating the levers in Area 13 is SW, NE, SE, and NW. Using them properly removes the plug in Area 20, giving characters access to the rest of the Outer Vaults.
- Danar had many loyal allies, including his wife, Parnaith, a pegasus named Voastra, a nymph named Estalada, and a four-winged angel named Bastion.
- The Dread One had many lieutenants, including Vallacor the prison warden and Solonar the Blackguard.

Unfortunately, about anything else, Geristranomos gives the wrong answer. His construct memory is flawed when it comes to minor details. He no longer accurately remembers where any of the traps or guardians are. He can't even find his way around any more. If repaired, he will help his rescuers fight their enemies—but he will not fight guardians in the warrens. He also will attack anyone—even a rescuer, no matter how kind—who attempts to open a Vault Door or a Sealed Door.

He speaks the following languages: Celestial, Common, Draconic, Elvish, and Gnome.

Geristranomos, Exp5: CR 7; Medium special construct; HD 5d6; hp 24; Init +8; Speed 30 feet; AC 14 (+4 Dex); Attack +7 melee, or +7 ranged; SQ Construct immunities; SV Fort +1, Ref +5, Will +8; AL N; Str 18, Dex 19, Con —, Int 18, Wis 18, Cha 18

Skills and Feats: Alchemy +8, Appraise +6, Balance +10, Craft (stoneworking) +12, Craft (metalworking) +6, Craft (trapbuilding) +9, Disable Device +11, Disguise +12, Hide +12, Knowledge (engineering) +14, Knowledge (nature) +6, Listen +4, Move Silently +8, Scry +13, Sense Motive +7, Spot +8, Use Rope +7; Improved Initiative, Skill Focus (Knowledge [engineering]), Skill Focus (Disable Device)

17. Materials Storeroom (EL 7)

This chamber is filled with stacks of cut stone, steel reinforcements and girders, and a variety of stone and metalworking tools.

This storeroom held materials while these vaults were under construction. The extra supplies here were never used.

Creature

A dead spirit from long ago, animated by the evil around it, has become a spectre that now haunts this chamber. It hides behind the stacks of material here (Hide +13). It lies in wait for the first living creature it sees and attempts to drain it. Then the spectre darts away, hiding, hoping to do the same again.

Spectre: hp 50, AC 15, +6 incorporeal touch (1d8 + energy drain), undead qualities, incorporeal, +2 turn resistance; see MM, page 169

18. The Warrenbuilders

Reminder: In this area, the PCs might meet the "Green Hag," as described in Event 1.

In the north wall of this room, stairs lead down, while the southern wall sports a door in the middle of an elaborate fresco, now faded and chipped. The artwork shows tall winged humans with flaming swords flanking the door.

In the eastern portion of the room, three squat humanoids of bronze, their heads and limbs clearly jointed and hinged, rest unmoving on their haunches.

These magical constructs are part of the work force that built much of the Banewarrens. When anyone enters the room, they stand at attention and wait for a command. However, they only take commands from someone wielding the Banewarrens key. They each have the same statistics as Medium animated objects, except that they cannot fight. If ordered to fight, they take no action.

Warrenbuilders (3): hp 11 each, AC 14, construct qualities; see MM, page 17

19. The Drainage Pool (EL 8)

Reminder: In this area, the PCs may meet the "Green Hag," as described in Event 1. Or Navanna Vladaam might be hiding in wait here, as described in Event 3.

This room lies directly below Area 32 (see The Outer Vaults: Map 2 on page 56).

The floor of this odd-shaped room lies about 3 feet below the level of the door. Blue tiles, each about 6 inches across, cover the floor and the walls up to a level just below the bottom of the door. Here and there, at the top of the level of the tiles, a rectangular grate covers a hole about 10 inches wide and 6 inches high.

Near the middle of the room, two tall columns made of glass rise from floor to ceiling. They are filled with water, and each also contains what appears to be a giant, monstrous octopus. The pillars stand about 30 feet apart and have a diameter of 8 feet each. Between them, hanging down from the ceiling to a point about 6 feet from the floor, you see a steel cylinder. The bottom of the cylinder has a heavy, hinged metal cap with a circular wheel-valve in the middle of it.

#4

Show the players illustration #4. If a character turns the wheel valve at the bottom of the middle cylinder (Strength check, DC 15), it unseals the cap, which swings open quickly and powerfully. This is dangerous: The character must make a Reflex save (DC 14) to avoid being struck by the cap, suffering 2d6 points of damage on a failure. When the cap opens, water from Area 32 (see The Outer Vaults: Map 2) begins to pour down into this chamber. Those standing within 30 feet of the open valve must make a Balance check (DC 15) to keep their footing—otherwise they are knocked down from the sudden onrush of water and remain stunned for 1 round.

The water pours down quickly for 30 rounds. The level of the water in this chamber never rises above 3 feet (the level of the tile), because the excess drains through the grates. Anyone in the room during these 30 rounds must make either a Balance or a Swim check (DC 15) or be pummeled by the rushing water, stunned for a round. After the 30 rounds, the water remains at a level of about 3 feet deep.

Anyone attempting to close the valve must not only make a successful Balance check each round during the attempt, but a Strength check (DC 35) to close the cap and another check (DC 15) to seal it using the wheel.

The water is briny and smells of fish—in fact, small fish swim in the water that rushes down.

Draining Area 32 into this chamber makes the upstairs room much easier to cross than it otherwise would be.

The thick glass of the pillars has a hardness of 3, 8 hit points, and a Break DC of 18. Breaking one of these pillars brings the octopus inside into the room immediately and floods the chamber as described above.

Creatures

Two rounds after the valve opens, the suction of the water draws one of the octopi seen in the glass pillars up and then down, into this chamber, where it attacks anything it can get its tentacles on. If left alone, it is (obviously) not drawn through the grates; when the room finishes draining it remains here, in the shallow water, attacking anything it can get at. See Area 32 for more information on the octopus.

The Secret Door

The southeast corner of the room hides a secret door. It is on the same level as the regular door, 3 feet above the floor and right above the top edge of the tile line. A Search check (DC 20) is needed to find the door. Behind it lies a secret passage to Area 20—giving access to the room beyond the *wall of force* described below.

20. Wall of Force

Reminder: In this area, the PCs might meet the "Green Hag," as described in Event 1. On the other hand, Navanna Vladaam might be hiding in wait here, as described in Event 3, or the PCs may observe signs that "Time Passes," per Event 5.

This chamber widens toward the south end. It appears to be a dead end.

This room is not a dead end at all, but it is very difficult to pass through.

Wall of Force

The first of two potent seals, a magical *wall of force* (as the spell) cuts this room almost in half, sealing off the south end of the chamber from the north end; the characters can use the secret passage from Area 19 to bypass the *wall*. Unless the PCs have a *disintegrate* or a *teleport* spell, they need to use the secret passage to get by. (In theory, a *passwall* from Area 9 also would work.)

The Plug

A Search check of the room's south wall (DC 18) reveals that the eastern 20-foot section of the wall is actually part of a large stone block. This stone block rises up into the ceiling, but only when someone has activated all four levers in Area 13. Otherwise it remains a solid 20-foot cube of rock that weighs many tons.

21. Poison Vault

The door into this chamber is a Vault Door (for details, see "Banewarrens Specifics" in the Introduction).

Behind the well-protected door, this 20-foot-square chamber holds just a simple stone block in the middle of the room. Atop it rests a ceramic jug.

The jug is sealed with wax around its stopper. It holds three doses of Shasak poison powder. See the Banes Appendix for more information.

22. Item Vault (EL 3)

The door into this chamber is a Vault Door (for details, see "Banewarrens Specifics" in the Introduction).

The 20-foot-square vault contains nothing save an inset shelf cut into the stone of the south wall. Within this niche you see a red stone disk.

The red stone disk is the *disk of dissolution.* See the Banes Appendix for more information. The shelf, however, is protected by a *glyph of warding* that blasts anyone touching the disk.

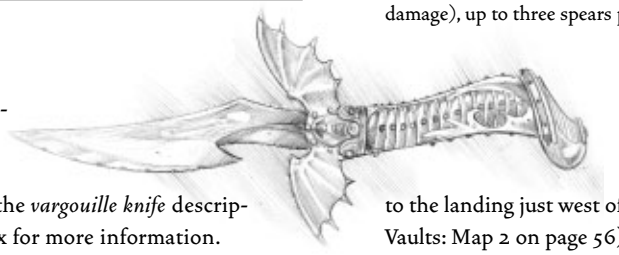
Glyph of Warding: CR 3; 5-foot lightning burst (3d8 points of damage); Reflex save (DC 15) halves; Search (DC 28); Disable Device (DC 28)

23. Vault of the Knife

The door into this chamber is a Vault Door (for details, see "Banewarrens Specifics" in the Introduction).

A floating orb bobs in the air in the center of this otherwise empty room. The orb is made of opaque purple glass.

The orb is normal glass with a permanent *levitate* spell cast upon it. A character can break it easily, and anyone who does so finds an evil dagger within. See the *vargouille knife* description in the Banes Appendix for more information.



24. Will-o'-Wisp (EL 7)

This 50-foot-long chamber features a 10-foot-high stone platform suspended by iron chains in the northwest corner. It can be reached by what appear to be fairly rickety wooden stairs. A door in the north wall is at the level of the platform.

The raised area is merely a platform hanging from chains, so characters can get underneath it if they desire.

Creatures

Danar bound a guardian here in the form of a special will-o'-wisp that can throw arcs of electricity up to 50 feet as its (normal melee or ranged) attack. It waits on the ledge invisibly, attacking (probably with surprise) anyone coming into the room.

Special Will-o'-Wisp: CR 7†; hp 40, AC 29, +16 shock bolt (2d8, 50-foot range), immune to most spells, can become invisible; see MM, page 183

† This monster's CR is increased to 7 due to its ability to attack at range. It is in every other way similar to a normal will-o'-wisp.

25. Magical Spear Trap (EL 3)

To the west, the back wall of a 10-foot alcove bears a relief of three plate-armored warriors. They each hold shields in one hand and have raised their other hands above their heads, as if to throw something. However, they appear to hold sparkling gems in those hands.

Immediately to the north, a staircase leads up.

The gems in the alcove launch spears of force energy at anyone standing to the east of it (in front of the staircase). These spears are magically guided, and the trigger is magical. As long as anyone is in the area (or when someone crosses through it), a spear fires from each intact gem once per round (so the trap might shoot a maximum of three per round if all three gems remain in the wall). The spears fire only at creatures, not objects, and dissipate after 1 round. If the characters disable the trap successfully, they can remove the gems, destroying the trap forever. Each gem is a large amethyst worth 250 gp.

Magical Spear Trap: CR 3; +10 ranged attack (1d8+4 points of damage), up to three spears per round; Search (DC 28); Disable Device (DC 28)

The stairs to the north match up with the southern edge of the stairs leading up to the landing just west of Area 26 (See The Outer Vaults: Map 2 on page 56).

26. Shrine

A massive marble statue of a winged horse rears atop a foot-high, 5-foot-wide pedestal in the center of this room. The walls are covered in plaster, much of which is peeling, cracked, and chipped. All the plaster has faded to a brownish yellow, but it still bears painted images of majestic temples and regal-looking warriors in shining armor. Angels and eagles fill the skies. A few bronze sconces hang empty on the walls.

The statue depicts Voastra, a close pegasus companion to Danar Rotansin. This chamber is a shrine to him and to the glorious future that Danar foresaw, completely free of evil.

This room enjoys the benefits of a *hallow* spell, from the **T**-intersection at the north end to the southernmost wall, and from the western wall to the eastern wall (and spreading into Area 27). The area once had a spell effect fixed to it (as described in *hallow*), but it has faded over time.

Secret Door

The secret door on the western wall is difficult to find (Search, DC 30). Further, it cannot be opened from this side, only from

the other side (in Area 34), unless someone touches it with the Banewarrens key. Then it opens easily. This stone door is 6 inches thick, with a hardness 8, 90 hit points, and a Break DC of 35.

27. Inscription

The long eastern wall of this chamber is covered in large, flowing script etched into the stone and filled with white plaster. At the north end of the room, a large alcove holds a while marble statue of a man wearing long robes, holding a wooden staff. He has a gentle look upon his face and a wistful look in his eyes.

The southern wall is damp.

The words on the wall, written in Celestial, read as follows:

For I see a future day when all the darkness is gone
and the taint of evil has been forever banished.
Even now, the demons have returned to the Abyss,
and the legions of Hell itself fear the light of our world's day.
I have chosen not to slay, not to destroy, but to contain.
Just as nature renews itself, the living gaining life from the dead,
so too does evil draw upon even that which is destroyed.
To crush evil is to free it and let it become a new darkness.
A new bane.
The banes shall be sealed away.
Sealed away, along with their evil essence.
Trapped forever.

The statue, of Danar, has no special properties. The dampness of the southern wall comes from its proximity to the water-filled Area 32.

28. The Hidden Switch

This simple 30-foot-square room stands empty except for a door in the eastern portion of the north wall and an arch leading out from the northwest corner.

Anyone checking out the ceiling in this room specifically notes that it is not a normal stone ceiling but instead a horizontal wall of magical *darkness* 15 feet above the floor. The ceiling is actually 30 feet high, the topmost 15 feet enshrouded in permanent *darkness*. For dispelling purposes, the *darkness* was cast by a 17th-level caster.

Anyone climbing or flying up into the *darkness* can make a Search check (DC 30 if climbing, DC 25 if flying) to discover that in the exact center of the ceiling, an iron ladder hangs down. At the top of the ladder, there is a switch (requiring another Search check in the dark to find, DC 25). This switch opens a secret door in the south wall of this room.

However, if someone Searches the eastern wall (DC 20), a successful check uncovers a stone in the masonry that pushes in. When pushed, this stone activates a mechanism that lowers the ceiling 15 feet, so the ladder reaches the ground. The switch at the top then is easy to see and reach.

Secret Door

Without making use of the switch, characters can find the extremely well hidden secret door only in a Search of the chamber (DC 35), and they still cannot open it without the switch. This 6-inch-thick stone door has hardness 8, 90 hit points, and a Break DC of 35.

29. Floor Trap (EL 2)

Reminder: This area can show PCs how "Time Passes," as described in Event 5.

The door into this room is a Vault Door (for details, see "Banewarrens Specifics" in the Introduction).

A long, narrow room stretches north and south. Stairs on the west side of the north end reach to a higher area beyond.

Anyone touching the floor suffers 2d6 points of electrical damage per round. No save is allowed.

Electrified Floor Trap: CR 2; 2d6 points of electrical damage; Search (DC 27); Disable Device (DC 27)

30. The Hanged Man (EL 6)

The stairs leading up to Area 30 are trapped. When anyone weighing at least 100 lbs. steps on them, blades pop out horizontally from the walls, slicing at the victim's feet.

Foot Slicer Trap: CR 1; 1d6 points of damage plus the victim falls backward into the trap in Area 29; Reflex save (DC 18) avoids, Balance check (DC 20) negates the fall; Search (DC 20); Disable Device (DC 20)

The upper half of a suit of full plate armor—the cuirass, vambraces, and gorget—hangs from a black chain over a 20-foot-wide pit in the north section of this chamber. A tattered red surcoat hangs about the armor, as well as various bits of a chainmail hauberk.

The pit measures 40 feet deep and contains bones, tattered cloth, chain links, and other minor debris.

If anyone approaches within 30 feet of the armor, the chain and armor pieces begin to rattle eerily. A ragged face appears where the head of a person would be if someone were wearing the armor. The face appears ancient, ill-used, and contemptuous.

A spirit of an evil soul named Tirranth Invir possesses the armor. He was once a mighty warlord, but was hanged for atrocities he committed. His spirit hangs onto his armor so strongly that no one could ever banish it. So it was kept here. Now, however, Tirranth the Warlord is ready to leave—but he finds himself unable to do so. If the PCs attempt to speak

with him, they should make a Diplomacy check (DC 20). If successful, Tirranth says, in the voice of the grave, that he can give them valuable information if only they will help free him so he can pass on to the afterlife. He knows his soul will rot in Hell, but at least it will be a different Hell than this one.

Tirranth relays not only his own background but also the following information:

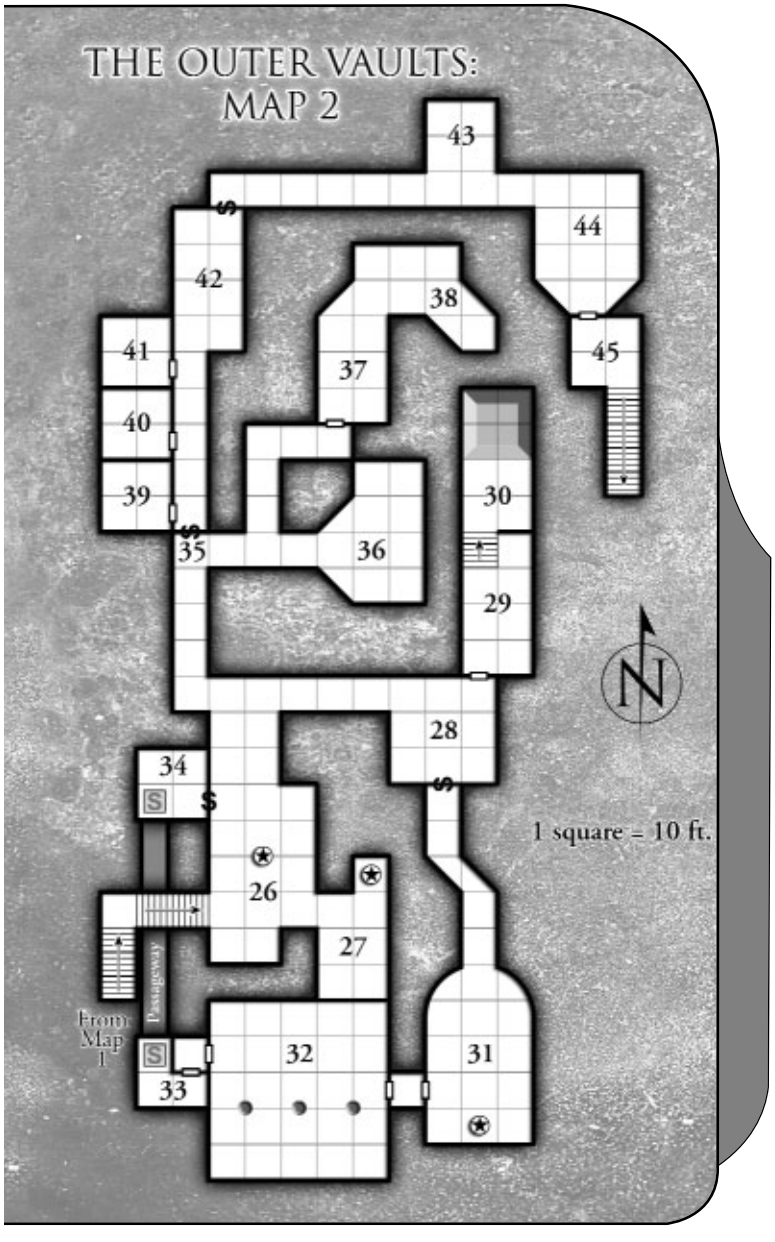
- He outlines a few basic facts about Danar and the history of the Banewarrens (see the Introduction).
- Danar attempted to make the Banewarrens truly impregnable—and almost succeeded. However, he did not completely ward one area before he turned to evil and became Eslathagos Malkith.
- Danar had an item called the *sealing rod* that could seal the special doors. It is now in an open vault in Tremoc Korin: the Baneheart.
- He can tell the PCs the general location of any bane they can name. (A general location would be "in the Baneheart, 1,200 feet up the shaft" or "in the Inner Vaults, beyond the Conflagration" with no other information.)
- The warding effect is created by the *warding generators*.

Even if the PCs succeed at the Diplomacy check, however, Tirranth remains contemptuous, arrogant, and mean. He's also no fool. He will make sure the characters possess the power to free his spirit (mostly, he just needs to know they have holy water and a *bless* or *command* spell). He has a +15 Sense Motive modifier to ascertain whether they're lying to him.

If the PCs all fail their Diplomacy checks (allow each character who wishes to try the check), Tirranth takes on a horrifying appearance. All within the room must make a Will saving throw (DC 20) or be affected as if by a *fear* spell. After that, he will not speak.

When he has told them what they want to know, Tirranth explains that the characters all must kneel and chant his name three times, then sprinkle a vial of holy water into the pit. Then they must either cast *bless* on the armor or *command* him to leave. (This process is relatively simple, but it only works now because Tirranth *wants* to leave.) What he doesn't tell them is that, now that his resolve has diminished, they could destroy him by casting any of these spells on or near him or the armor: *disintegrate*, *Mordenkainen's disjunction*, or *holy word*.

If the PCs attempt to attack, turn, or dispel Tirranth, they find themselves unable to affect him in any way. Only the prescribed methods can get rid of him. The spirit responds to such hostile actions with his *fear* ability. Those still remaining within 50 feet of the armor after that take a point of temporary Strength damage each round until they leave. Tirranth is a powerful, temperamental spirit.



Treasure

Once Tirranth has gone, the armor restores itself to a shining, complete suit of plate. The armor is magical *+1 plate of moderate fortification*.

XP Adjustment

Award the PCs the appropriate amount of experience for having overcome a CR 6 challenge if they speak with and free Tirranth.

31. Water Spirit Shrine

The walls and floors of this room look blue-green. A strange, bluish light fades in and out, giving the impression of water currents. Here and there, on the walls and floor, an inlaid mosaic of tiny dark stones depicts an octopus or other creature of the murky depths.

To the south stands a statue of a beautiful woman carved from a greenish stone atop a pedestal of coral. The pedestal bears a corroded bronze plaque that reads: "Estalada."

Estalada, a nymph, was an ally to Danar while he was alive. While he worked here, he created this chamber and Area 32 as her domain. When he turned to evil, she left, and Area 32 became an effective barrier to anyone trying to reach the secret passageway between Areas 33 and 34. Her name, however, is still the password to bypass the *forbiddance* spell in Area 43.

32. The Water Tank (EL Varies)

This room sits directly above Area 19. The 10-foot-square chambers immediately east and west of this one are airlocks. Each contains two rusted iron levers. Both doors leading into this chamber are made of thick glass, which has a hardness of 3, 8 hit points, and a Break DC of 18. Breaking one of the glass doors floods the airlock and makes it possible to flood or partially flood other areas as well, such as Area 33 or Areas 26 to 28 and 31, assuming that appropriate doors have been left open.

The first lever in each airlock functions only with both doors closed. When someone pulls this level in either room, both rooms slowly (taking 10 rounds) fill with water through grates in their north walls. The second lever in each airlock opens both glass doors into Area 32 by sliding them down into the floor. The second lever also closes both doors if returned to its original position. The second lever will not function unless the airlock is full of water. If a character returns the first lever to its original position, both airlock rooms drain the same way they filled, taking 10 rounds to empty. This lever does not function with the glass doors open. As a default, if left filled, both airlocks drain after 30 minutes.

Use this text if the valve cap in Area 19 remains sealed.

Through the glass door, you see a large square chamber filled with water. Tiny fish swim about. Three dark, circular pits, each about 8 feet across, lie in the middle of the floor in a line just south of both this door and another glass door that you can barely see through the murk, on the other side of the room. The chamber appears to measure about 50 feet across.

Use this text if this chamber has been drained.

This large chamber is very wet. Algae and dark slime cling to the stone walls and floor, and dozens of tiny fish flop about the floor. Even more lie dead. Three circular pits, each about 8 feet across, punctuate the middle of the floor in a line just south of both this door and another glass door on the other side of the room. Two of the pits, the one nearest and the one farthest away, hold murky water. The room stinks of fish and brine. An odd, sparkling cube about 6 inches across sits on the floor in the middle of the north end of the room.

Of course, if the room was drained by breaking one of the two glass pillars in Area 19 (instead of via the valve), then the corresponding pit holds no water.

If the room is still filled with water, PCs can attempt to cross by flooding the airlocks and either holding their breaths or using *water breathing.* Either way, they have to deal with both octopi in the chamber—very bad news for any characters trying to hold their breath.

The Cube

Only noticeable if the room is drained, a magic item on the floor at the center of the room's north wall is a *fish generator*. It magically creates 30 to 40 of the small fish in this chamber every day to feed the octopus guardians.

Creatures

At least one, if not both (see Area 19) of the water-filled pits contains a ferocious, monstrous octopus that is more than willing to use its grab attacks to snare anyone coming close and pull them into the water. There they face drowning as well as the octopus' attacks, assuming the room is drained.

The Fish Generator

This magical item is useful to anyone wishing to have a continual (if meager) food supply. If submerged in water, it produces 3-inch-long fish at the rate of 1d6 per hour.

Caster Level: *5;* Prerequisites: *Craft Wondrous Item*, create food and water; Market Price: *1,500 gp*

If the room is not drained, the octopi both swoop up out of their pits, attacking anything and everything in the room.

Monstrous (Giant) Octopi (2): hp 43 and 50, AC 18, +10 tentacle rakes (1d4+5, eight attacks) and +5 bite (1d8+2), 10-foot reach, improved grab, constrict (2d8+6 points of damage), ink cloud; see MM, page 199

33. Door Chain

A long iron chain hangs down from a small hole in the ceiling of this little chamber. The walls and floor here feel very damp, and the place smells of fish.

This difficult-to-reach room (due to the water in Area 32) simply holds the means to open the secret door in Area 35. Pulling the chain here unlocks that door.

Secret Floor Hatch and Passage

On the floor at the north end of the room lies a secret stone hatch (Search check, DC 20 to find). Pried up, it gives access to a passage about 12 feet below. The rough-hewn stone hallway feels very damp and measures only 6 feet wide and high. The passageway leads to a similar hatch in Area 34. Iron rungs have been pounded into the stone at either end of the secret passage.

34. Secret Room

This 20-foot-square room bears little of note.

On the floor is a well-hidden secret stone hatch (Search check, DC 25 to find). Pried up, it gives access to a passage

about 12 feet below. The rough-hewn stone passage feels very damp and measures only 6 feet wide and high. The passageway leads to a similar hatch in Area 33. Iron rungs have been pounded into the stone at either end of the secret passage.

The secret door on the western wall is difficult to find (Search check, DC 30). Once located, it opens normally from this side into Area 26. This stone door is 6 inches thick, with a hardness 8, 90 hit points, and a Break DC of 35.

35. Secret Door (EL 6)

Reminder: This area can show the PCs how "Time Passes," as described in Event 5.

This secret door is extremely hard to find (Search check, DC 35), and even harder to open. The chain in Area 33 releases the locking mechanisms. Otherwise, it must be broken down. The 6-inch-thick door is reinforced with an iron plate a half-inch thick on the north side (hardness 10, 120 hit points, Break DC 42).

Further, the door carries a trap. Inflicting any damage upon it at all causes a 10-foot-square column of rock 20 feet high to drop out of the ceiling above. This falling column not only seals this corner but inflicts 12d6 points of damage on anyone standing beneath it.

Crushing Column Trap: CR 6; 12d6 points of damage to all in 10-foot-square area, Reflex save (DC 20) negates, Search (DC 30), Disable Device (DC 25)

Development

When someone opens this door, the door to Area 37 opens as well. The four girallons there come out and attack anyone in Area 35, then patrol the area for 24 hours, attacking anyone else they see. After that time, they return to Area 37 and the door to that room relocks.

36. Empty Room

A few bits of wood lie on the floor in the northern section of this room. A few holes drilled into the east wall suggest that, at one time, some sort of structure was in place here.

This chamber served as a staging area during the construction of the vaults and traps in this part of the Outer Vaults. Amid the wood, characters can find a few simple tools. Once, large wooden shelves built into the eastern wall held crates.

37. Girallon Guardians (EL 9)

The door to this room is locked (DC 25 to open). It opens automatically if the door in Area 35 opens.

This room smells of musk and fur. Four nestlike beds of cloth scraps, straw, and what looks like white fur serve as the only furnishings.

If the PCs do not actually break down the door, but open it normally, they find the girallons that live here asleep (assuming they are here and not in Area 35). Only a very loud noise or someone physically disturbing them wakes them up.

Creatures

Four girallons, magically compelled to remain here as guards, spend most of their time asleep in their beds dreaming blissfully. When aroused, either by someone coming into the room and making noise, or by someone opening the secret door in Area 35, they attack intruders viciously. They remain awake patrolling for 24 hours before going back to sleep.

Girallons (4): hp 49, 50, 55, 64; AC 16, +12 claws (1d4+8, four attacks) and +7 bite (1d8+4), rend (2d4+12), scent; see MM, page 104

38. Shrine of Life

A short, dead-end section of the girallons' room hosts a small shrine with a delicate trellis of carved wood arching above it. Strangely, green ivy vines wrap around the trellis, apparently alive and thriving despite the lack of natural light. The shrine itself boasts a small wooden idol of a woman wearing a long gown of leaves, with birds perched upon her shoulders and small animals scurrying about her feet.

This is a shrine to the Goddess of Life and Sustenance. Through her blessing, the girallons have been granted eternal life with no need for food (but a considerable need for sleep). If disturbed or removed, the shrine crumbles to dust, the ivy blackening and dying immediately. Without the shrine, the girallons become mortal again. The shrine offers no special abilities to anyone else.

39. Vault of the Lich's Hand

Reminder: This area can show PCs how "Time Passes," as described in Event 5.

The door into this room is a Vault Door (for details, see "Banewarrens Specifics" in the Introduction). If it opens, the magical screen in Area 42 (see below) summons a huge air elemental that comes here and attacks.

This 20-foot-square vault has a single marble pedestal in the middle of the room. A mummified hand floats about 6 inches above the top of the pedestal.

The hand is the *lich's hand,* described in the Banes Appendix. Currently, due to a mighty spell powered by the pedestal, the hand is incorporeal and cannot be touched. A character's own hand passes right through it, should anyone try to touch it. An ethereal character could take the hand (and it would become corporeal as the character does so). The only other way to obtain the hand is to deactivate the pedestal. To do so, a character must pivot it manually, first fully counterclockwise, then a half-turn clockwise. An incorrect pivot causes the pedestal to emit a greenish glow with a radius of 20 feet. Anyone caught within the glow must succeed at a Fortitude saving throw (DC 18) or suffer 1d4 points of temporary Intelligence damage.

A rogue could ascertain the correct deactivation procedure by making a Disable Device check (DC 28).

40. Vault of Vampiric Mist

Reminder: This area can show the PCs how "Time Passes," as described in Event 5.

The door into this room is a Vault Door (for details, see "Banewarrens Specifics" in the Introduction). If it opens, the magical screen in Area 42 (see below) summons a huge air elemental that comes here and attacks.

A sphere 10 feet in diameter shimmers as it floats in this 20-foot-square room. Within it, greenish mist roils and seethes as if stirred by some powerful air current.

The sphere is a permanent *Otiluke's resilient sphere*. Within, it holds a terrible bane called the *vampiric mist*. See the Banes Appendix for more information.

41. Vault of the Lying Skull

The door into this room is a Vault Door (see "Banewarrens Specifics" in the Introduction). If it opens, the magical screen in Area 42 (see below) summons a huge air elemental that comes here and attacks.

This 20-foot-square chamber is empty.

Hidden in the floor of this room is a secret panel 2 feet square that slides to one side (Search, DC 25 to find). Once someone slides it, a 2-foot-square pillar made of iron-reinforced stone rises up to the ceiling. Within a small cavity in the middle of the pillar—accessed via a foot-wide hole on each side of this column—rests a skull. Each hole is blocked by an iron grate. To get at the skull, a character must pull off the grate (Strength check, DC 30) or destroy it (hardness 10, 35 hit points).

The item here is the *lying skull.* See the Banes Appendix for more information.

42. Elemental Summoning Chamber (EL Varies)

The walls, ceiling, and even the floors here are coated in faded, chipping paint. An elaborate mural still shows blue skies and white, fluffy clouds, giving the impression of flight high in the air—or, in fact, in a place with no ground at all.

Near the north end of the room, about 15 feet from the wall, a folding screen hides a portion of the chamber. Its cloth panels are also painted, depicting a violent whirlwind.

Screen

Should anyone enter this room or open a door into Areas 39, 40, or 41, the screen summons a huge air elemental. The screen is easily destroyed (hardness 0, 8 hit points, Break DC of 15), and that's the best way to keep it from summoning more elementals.

Creatures

An elemental attacks the creature that caused its summoning as quickly as it can. The summoning effect is cumulative. If someone opens two doors, the screen summons an elemental both times. If someone opens the door to Area 41 while someone else enters this room, two elementals appear. (Multiple characters taking the same action summon only one elemental. For example, if two characters enter a room or work together to open a door, only one elemental appears.)

Note to the DM

Toward the end of this chapter, remember to stage Event 4: Kidnapped!, as long as Event 2: Grailquest Team 2 has already taken place.

Huge Air Elemental: hp 135, AC 21, +19/+14/+9 slam (2d8+6), air mastery, whirlwind, elemental qualities, damage reduction 10/+2; see MM, page 81

43. Forbiddance

A squarish area stretches north from this east-west passage. Silver runes are inlaid in the floor of the area. Slightly tarnished bronze torch sconces hang on the plaster-covered walls.

This 20-by-30-foot area carries the effects of a *forbiddance* spell, keyed to alignment. The caster's alignment was lawful good. The spell's DC is 19. It can be bypassed, however, by anyone saying the name "Estalada."

44. Legacy Illusion

Reminder: In this area, the PCs may meet the "Green Hag" described in Event 1.

An image of light in the form of a human man with a gentle face appears. He wears white robes and a golden chasuble. With an imploring expression, he holds his hands out to block your approach. "Please," a male voice says, "go no farther. You risk letting loose some of the greatest evils the world has ever known." The image fades.

The illusion is an image of Danar. If the traps, guardians, and other mechanisms do not keep intruders from plunging deeper into the Banewarrens, he thought perhaps an impassioned plea might.

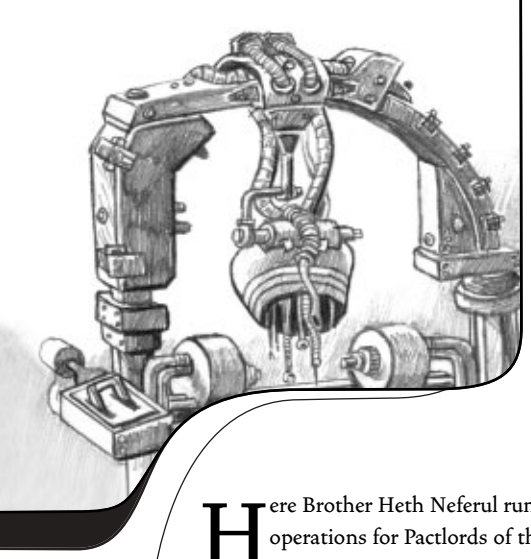
#2

A door at the south end of this chamber is a Sealed Door. **Show the PCs illustration #2.** Refer to Chapter Three for details about Sealed Doors, as well as the "Banewarrens Specifics" section in the Introduction.

45. Entry to the Inner Vaults

Beyond the Sealed Door lies a 20-foot-square chamber with a staircase leading up at the south end. The east and west walls bear holy symbols that tools or even claws have chipped and marred. A black skull symbol has been crudely painted over the top of the religious iconography.

The stairs on The Outer Vaults: Map 2 lead up to a 10-foot-square landing and then turn west, becoming the staircase shown on The Inner Vaults: Map 1 (see page 83).



Chapter Six

The Belfry

This chapter deals entirely with events and locations in the city. Primarily, it concerns the Chapel of St. Thessina and, in particular, the belfry of that church.

Here Brother Heth Neferul runs the primary base of operations for Pactlords of the Quaan in Ptolus. It was from here that the Pactlords contacted and "hired" the umber hulk to dig the meandering passage detailed in Chapter Two, and this is where the Grailquest Teams assembled and planned. At the top of the tower lies a portal to the Quaan itself.

Return to the City

One way or another, the PCs likely will be forced to return to the city when they have reached the end of the Outer Vaults. This may be an opportunity for some rest, a chance to buy (or make) new gear, or even an opportunity for a side adventure.

Contacting Allies

The characters may use this opportunity to contact whatever allies they have made, such as Jevicca Norr or the priests of Lothian, and tell them what they have discovered in the Banewarrens.

Jevicca encourages them to go back in and do two things:

1. Continue to look for information regarding resealing the Banewarrens.
2. Learn what the Church of Lothian is up to. She tells them she has heard the Church is preparing to send a team of their own down into the warrens.

Church representatives such as Brother Fabitor or Sister Mara (see Chapter One) encourage the characters to learn more about who is attempting to get into the Banewarrens, and why. They are quite concerned because divinations (or perhaps the PCs) have told them the Vladaam family is involved.

Confronting Enemies

The player characters probably don't know where to confront the Pactlords—yet. The desire to find them could send them right to the Chapel of St. Thessina without further motivation or prompting. Divination spells might lead them there, but the chapel itself is blocked specifically against divine-magic divinations. A Gather Information check (DC 30) and contacts within the city's seedy underworld reward a PC with the information that strange monstrous humanoids and other "monsters" have been known to hang around in the Rivergate District. They've even been seen around the Chapel of St. Thessina at times.

The characters almost certainly know where to confront Navanna Vladaam if they choose to do so, but going up against her (and her brother) in her own home is *extremely* dangerous. See Chapter Four for more information.

Tracking a Kidnap Victim

If the characters have returned to the city because Vo-Nul the Pactlord phase spider kidnapped one of their number, they might make it their first order of business to try to find their friend.

The PC has been taken to the Chapel of St. Thessina and is held by Brother Heth Neferul, who secretly works for the Pactlords of the Quaan. He places the PC within the *probe of dreams*, a device for gaining information from one's subconscious (see Area 18 in the chapel description below).

Waiting to Be Contacted (EL 7)

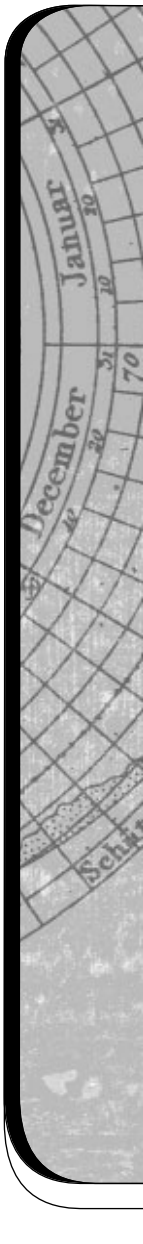
If the PCs wait, as the note they received instructed them to do, they won't hear any news for 48 hours. At that time, a courier delivers a ransom note to them. A female dwarf gave the courier the message. (It was Norsu Goldenvein, though he doesn't know her name.) He has no further information.

The note reads:

Your friend is alive and will be returned to you tomorrow if you put 100 platinum coins in a leather backpack and leave it behind the Bull and Bear armorers in Midtown tonight, after midnight.

It is true that the kidnapped victim is alive. His or her brain has been subjected to the *probe of dreams*, so Brother Heth and the Pactlords now know a great deal about the PCs, their goals, and so forth. Further, if the characters drop off the money, the victim is not returned to them—instead, Li the phasm impersonates the character and returns to the PCs with the intent of killing them one by one. It may take a few days to accomplish that task, but Li is not hasty. It will accompany them on their further adventures—even to the Chapel of St. Thessina. The phasm attempts to take each character aside individually, then turns into a mind flayer, attacks with surprise, and attempts to extract the PC's brain. If seriously threatened, it takes the form of a frost giant and fights, or the form of an adult white dragon and flies away.

In general, Li is evil and sadistic, taking an almost childish delight in deceiving and killing others. It never takes its



normal form, unless somehow forced to. If on the verge of defeat and changing form can in no way help, Li surrenders. If the player characters agree to let it live, it tells them their friend's location, then claims ignorance of any other fact (like why their friend is being held in a chapel of Lothian).

If the PCs do not deal with Li here, it makes an appearance in the Inner Vaults (Chapter Eight).

Li, phasm: hp 112, AC 17, +12 slams (1d3+1, 2 attacks), amorphous, alternate form, scent, telepathy, tremorsense; AL NE; see MM, page 150

Possessions: *Bone Quaan ring* (absorbed into its form)

Even if the PCs defeat Li, they still have to find their friend in the Chapel of St. Thessina.

The Drop-Off Point

The Bull and Bear armorers is a well-known resale shop for used armor of all kinds. It is located near the Ghostly Minstrel, and a fair number of shops nearby cater to adventurers and their like. The dark alleyway behind the shop, about 10 feet wide and 40 feet long, is open at both ends.

Characters who watch the spot where they left the bag of coins see Feldon (see the Chapel of St. Thessina in this chapter, "Arriving at the Chapel"), in his normal disguise as a cleric of Lothian, nonchalantly come by to pick up the platinum about an hour after it is dropped off. However, Norsu and Barrol (see the Chapel of St. Thessina, Area 7) wait nearby to back him up if he runs into trouble. If anyone attacks him, Feldon calls out for help from the city guards or even passers-by who might feel sympathetic to a cleric in trouble.

Scrying

PCs with the ability to *scry* using arcane means (not divine) can find their comrade quickly, although the spell won't give an exact location. They will see him or her strapped into a machine, apparently unconscious. Allow the *scrying* character to make a Spot check (DC 15). If successful, the scryer sees an open balcony in the background, overlooking what appears to be the King's River Gorge. The vantage point seems very high up. These details narrow the location down a bit. With just this information, the player characters could investigate all the very tall buildings overlooking the gorge. That might take a full day or two, however.

There is another tactic they could take. The PCs might have seen Norsu the dwarf when she and Vo-Nul kidnapped their friend (in Chapter Five). Vo-Nul is in the Quaan, where he can't be *scried*, but they could trace Norsu this way. If they attempt to *scry* her, they see her gazing out her window in the belfry, looking down on the chapel. This view gives the party a clear indication of a church—but no details on its exact location. Putting the information gained by *scrying* the kidnapped PC together with the vision of Norsu yields a location. There is only one church with a tall bell tower near the King's River Gorge.

If they cannot *scry*, they might contact Jevicca Norr, who will do it for them for free. She tells the group what she has found, as laid out above.

If the PCs contact their allies in the Church of Lothian, they are out of luck. The Pactlords have ensorcelled the entire chapel against divine *scrying* and other divinations.

Other Divinations

The city is too big for a spell like *locate creature* to work easily. Most other divinations remain far too inexact to help much with so little information to go on. Divine-magic divinations of 7th level or lower do not work at all.

A Captured Foe

The PCs might manage to capture one of the Pactlords from a previous encounter and successfully intimidate him or convince her to talk. In this situation, the Pactlord reveals that the kidnapped victim has been taken to the Chapel of St. Thessina. That's all the creature knows, however.

A Plea for Help

If a player's character has been kidnapped, you don't have to exclude that player from the game. The kidnapped PC is placed within the *probe of dreams*, a magical machine that forces a person to sleep, then extracts information from the resulting dreams. However, sometimes the victim's conscious mind remains free and can even control the physical form of another sleeping person.

The Infiltrator

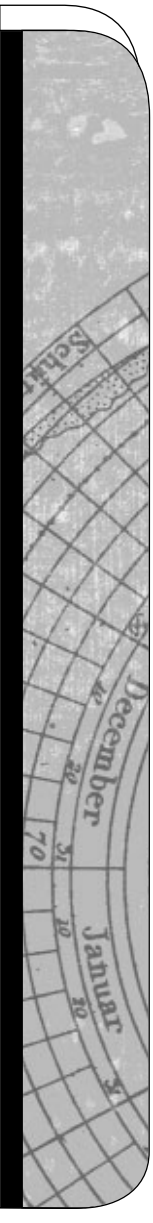
If Li impersonates the captured PC, allow that character's player to run Li, assuming the player doesn't mind temporarily roleplaying a secret plant trying to kill the entire party. Most players will appreciate the change of pace and the challenge!

Read the following to the player whose character has been kidnapped.

You become conscious as you are being strapped into a huge machine. The room you are in has a steepled wooden roof but stone walls—it almost looks as though you are at the top of a bell tower or similar place. A bald, severe-looking human man stands over you, adjusting the machine. A brutish, brown-furred humanoid with a heavy iron religious symbol around his neck watches you closely. You suddenly drift off to sleep, no matter how hard you try to fight it.

The next thing you know, you are somewhere completely different. You're in bed, in a room you've never seen before. Far stranger, however, is the fact that you feel completely different as well....

The character's conscious mind has just found itself in the body of a sleeping human bard named Admah Sheron. Admah is working as a singer and storyteller at the Ghostly Minstrel.



The character has none of Admah's memories, but does possess all of his abilities, skills, and so on. (Likewise, the character retains all of his or her own memories, but no abilities, skills etc.) It will take a while for the PC to acclimate to this new form, but eventually the character should be able to track down the rest of the party. Of course, the character will have to convince them that Admah's body really holds their missing friend!

Worse, the kidnapped character doesn't know exactly where his or her real body is—only that if the group can find it, the character can return to it. The kidnap victim remembers only what the boxed text above related, and no more. Of course, information gained via arcane *scrying* as well as the "bell tower" detail should narrow the search down to the proper place. Only one church tower overlooks the King's River Gorge.

Admah Sheron, male human Brd8: CR 8; Medium humanoid; HD 8d6+16; hp 51; Init +3; Speed 30 feet; AC 19 (+3 Dex, +5 armor, +1 ring); Attack +11/+6 melee (1d6+2, rapier), or +11/+6 ranged (1d8+2, longbow); SA Weave notes; SV Fort +4, Ref +9, Will +6; AL NG; Str 13, Dex 17, Con 15, Int 14, Wis 11, Cha 20

Skills and Feats: Bluff +14, Concentration +8, Escape Artist +8, Hide +8, Knowledge (arcana) +11, Knowledge (religion) +9, Listen +8, Move Silently +8, Perform +16, Pick Pocket +11, Sense Motive +11, Speak Language (nine extra languages), Spot +8, Tumble +5; Intensify Song†, Sustain Song†, Weapon Finesse (rapier), Weapon Focus (rapier)

Languages Spoken: Aquan, Auran, Celestial, Common, Dwarven, Elvish, Giant, Goblin, Halfling, Ignan, Orc, Sylvan

Possessions: *+1 rapier, +2 studded leather armor, +2 gauntlets of Dexterity*, masterwork buckler, masterwork mighty composite longbow (+1), 19 *+1 arrows*, *boots of speed, +1 ring of protection, goggles of night*, *potions of blur* and *cure moderate wounds,* dagger, 50 feet of silk rope, 64 gp

Spellsongs† Known (13/5): Notes—*influence, inspire courage, momentary disappearance, sonic dart, whisper*; chords—*disrupt thoughts, swift song*

† Admah is a variant bard from *Book of Eldritch Might II: Songs and Souls of Power*. To convert him to a standard bard, he loses 22 skill ranks, and his spellsongs become standard bard spells.

A Diversion

Once Navanna Vladaam discovers that the Pactlords of the Quaan are involved in the opening of the Banewarrens, her network of spies could learn fairly easily that one of their bases lies in the Chapel of St. Thessina. Should she make this discovery, she waits for the PCs to encounter the Pactlords in the previous chapter. During the battle she sneaks up and stealthily drops a note for the characters to find amid the Pactlords' possessions. This note says:

Meet me at the Chapel of St. Thessina for further instructions.
—Brother Heth

So, instead of going to the chapel to free their kidnapped friend, the party might have been lured there by Navanna's note instead. She creates this set-up to get her rivals to fight each other outside the Banewarrens, while hopefully she can progress farther inside. Basically, this diversion becomes another motivation to get the PCs to go to the chapel. This could always backfire on her, however, if the characters use divinatory magic to learn who actually wrote the note. (The spell *object loresight* from *The Book of Eldritch Might II* could reveal its author, for example.)

Going to the Church

If the player characters discover somehow that Brother Heth is involved with the Pactlords of the Quaan and take this information to the Church of Lothian, the priests there simply do not believe them at first. Brother Heth Neferul is well known and respected in the Church. The PCs will have to go to the chapel and get some proof (or take down Brother Heth themselves).

If, however, the PCs bring incontrovertible proof that Heth works for the Pactlords or is doing something really evil, the Church dispatches a unit of six Order of the Dawn guards to go with them to bring the betrayer to justice. When the task is done, Church officials reward each PC involved with a *potion of cure serious wounds* and two vials of holy water.

Typical Order of the Dawn Guard, male human Pal4: CR 4; Medium humanoid; HD 4d10+8; hp 20; Init +4; Speed 20 feet; AC 18 (+8 armor); Attack +7 melee (1d8+2, longsword); SV Fort +9, Ref +4, Will +6; AL LG; Str 13, Dex 11, Con 14, Int 11, Wis 15, Cha 16

Skills and Feats: Handle Animal +10, Heal +9, Knowledge (religion) +9, Ride +9; Combat Reflexes, Improved Initiative, Weapon Focus (longsword)

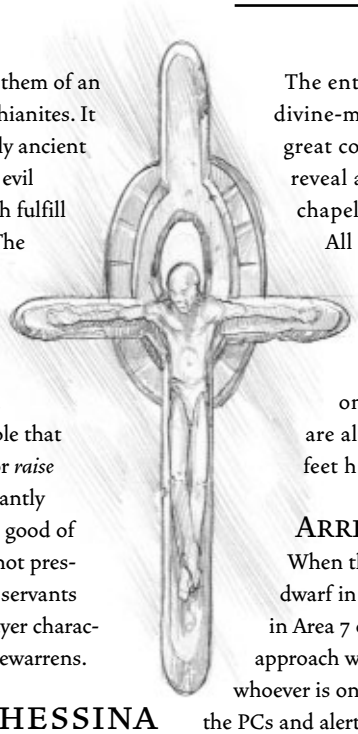
Possessions: *+1 longsword*, masterwork full plate armor, masterwork large wooden shield, dagger, 4 gp, 12 sp

Spells (1): 1st—*bless weapon*

Event: A New Mission

This event occurs after the player characters have revealed Brother Heth Neferul to be a traitor and have dealt with him. Sister Mara von Witten, a cleric of Lothian, sends word to the PCs that she would like to meet with them at the Grand Cathedral in the Temple District. (For more details on Sister Mara and the cathedral, see Chapter Three's "Interlude.")

If they agree, she thanks them for all their help and grants them four *potions of cure serious wounds* and a scroll (assuming they have a cleric among them) with the spell *heal* as gifts from the Emperor of the Church. She is eager to convince the party that Heth's actions and manipulations should not reflect on the Church as a whole. If she seems at all successful, she asks them to help the Church further.



Should they appear interested, she tells them of an ancient prophecy known only to a few Lothianites. It states that one day the *sword of truth*, a truly ancient artifact of goodness imprisoned within an evil spell, will be recovered and help the Church fulfill its destiny of bringing light to the world. The Church elders believe the prophecy speaks of the *sword of lies*, a weapon in the Banewarrens. They believe that, if this bane can be recovered, they can transform it into the holy sword they seek.

The church will pay 20,000 gp, or double that amount in spellcasting services (such as for *raise dead*) or magic item creation. More importantly the PCs would be doing something for the good of all. Ultimately, however, Sister Mara does not pressure them; the Church has plenty of other servants she could send. She only contacted the player characters because of their experience in the Banewarrens.

The Chapel of St. Thessina

This Chapel of St. Thessina is located in the Rivergate District, a purely residential area on a rise overlooking the King's River Gorge. (See the Ptolus map in the Introduction). The chapel sits right along the wall bordering the gorge; from the high belfry one can clearly see the river and the long fall down the side.

A character making a Gather Information check regarding the chapel can learn the following details, based on the result of the check:

Result	Information
15	Despite the fact that the chapel is clearly functional and people go in and out all the time, no one actually knows anyone who attends services there.
18	The chapel holds activities around the clock, it seems, for neighbors see lights in the belfry even very late at night.
20	It's said that the chapel's pastor, Brother Heth Neferul, has turned away those looking for healing or other services, sending them to another church even though they had money for donations. Rumor has it that the Church of Lothian is probably going to investigate and punish him for this behavior.
25	Neighbors have heard strange sounds coming from the chapel at night—noises like the buzzing of insects. (This noise is actually the machines at work.)
30	Some strange people—or, rather *creatures*—have been seen around the chapel. One, for example, appeared to be a normal person at first, but close up you could see he had fur and tusklike teeth. (This was Trolgir, a bugbear; see Area 18, below.)

The entire chapel has been warded against all divine-magic divinations of 7th level or lower, at great cost to the Pactlords. No such spell can reveal any information about the interior of the chapel or anyone currently within it.

All doors, unless otherwise noted, are standard wooden doors (hardness 5, 15 hit points, Break DC of 18). The chapel is made of stone, except for the wooden roof and the wooden floors on each of the tower levels. The ceilings are all 20 feet high, making the belfry 100 feet high.

Arriving at the Chapel

When the player characters approach, Norsu (the dwarf in Area 7 or 8) or Barrol (a half-orc barbarian in Area 7 or 11) stands watch. If the PCs attempt to approach with stealth, make opposed Spot checks for whoever is on watch. Otherwise, assume the guard sees the PCs and alerts everyone else in the belfry.

The chapel's back door (see Area 4) is locked (DC 26 to open), but the front doors are always open.

Inside, a halfling introducing himself as Brother Feldon Renlein greets the characters warmly and asks what he can do for them. He explains that he is an acolyte here; Brother Heth Neferul, the pastor, is not present. Brother Feldon does whatever he can to politely get the PCs to leave.

Feldon is no cleric. He's a rogue who works for Brother Heth. His job is to make it look as though this is an actual, functioning chapel, while Brother Heth goes about his real business: serving the Pactlords. Allow PCs familiar with *bone Quaan rings* to notice Feldon's (Spot check, DC 18). That's most likely a dead giveaway that "Brother Feldon" is not what he claims to be. If attacked or accused (to the point where there's no more use pretending), he runs to the belfry.

Feldon Renlein, male halfling Rog6: CR 6; Small humanoid; HD 6d6+6; hp 28; Init +8; Speed 20 feet; AC 18 (+4 Dex, +1 size, +3 armor); Attack +4 melee (1d8, heavy mace); SA +3d6 sneak attack, SV Fort +4, Ref +10, Will +4; AL NE; Str 11, Dex 18, Con 13, Int 14, Wis 13, Cha 13

Skills and Feats: Bluff +12, Climb +11, Diplomacy +10, Disable Device +9, Disguise +7, Escape Artist +7, Forgery +8, Hide +8, Jump +4, Listen +11, Move Silently +10, Search +11, Spot +8, Tumble +10, Use Rope +6; Dodge, Improved Initiative, Skill Focus (Bluff)

Possessions: *+1 leather armor, periapt of proof against poison, bone Quaan ring,* masterwork heavy mace, masterwork shortsword (hidden), 56 gp

1. Entry

The chapel's main doors lead into a long vestibule. On the walls here hang many tapestries—primarily of blue, gold, and white—depicting a long-haired man with a gentle expression performing various miracles.

The longed-haired man in the tapestries is Lothian.

2. Sanctuary

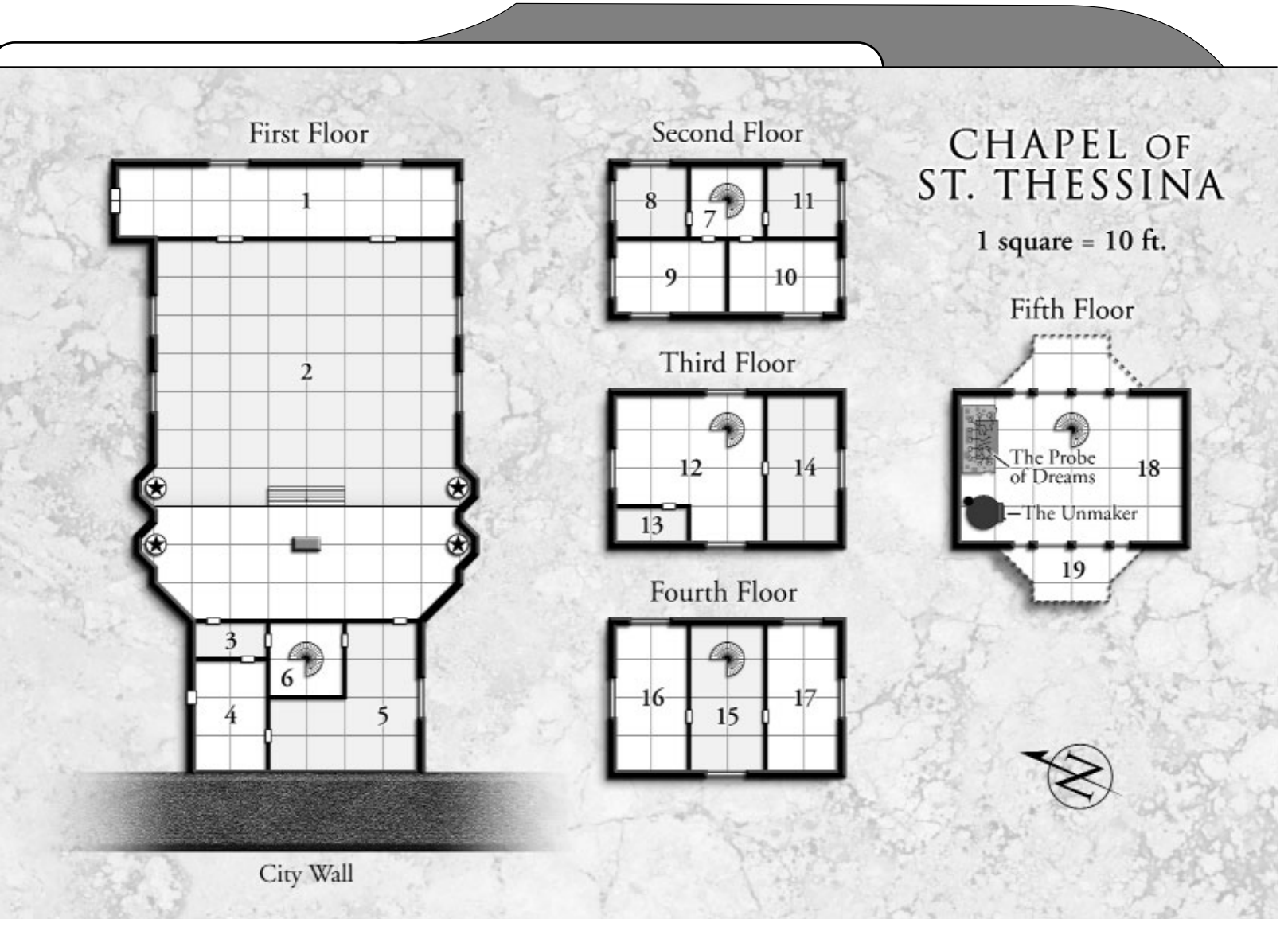
Two sets of heavy wooden doors lead into the sanctuary itself. Here three rows of wooden pews stretch toward the front of the church. At the western end of the sanctuary, wooden steps give way to an area raised about 3 feet above the rest of the room. In the middle of this area stands a large gilded altar. Two small alcoves on either side of the church—one pair on the dais flanking the altar and one pair in the lower part of the sanctuary opposite the steps—each hold 4-foot-high marble statues of saintly figures. A huge relief of Lothian crucified on an ankh dominates the wall behind the altar. The relief is flanked by two small, innocuous doors.

The chapel remains consecrated, despite the fact that the cleric in charge has lost all faith and spell ability.

3. Priestly Vestment Chamber

White and blue robes, some with gold or silver trim, hang from pegs on the walls here. A long, low trunk rests in one corner.

The trunk contains chasubles and other vestments. None of these items commands any significant value, however.



4. Office/Back Entry

This room, which appears to be an office, contains a wooden desk, some wooden cabinets, and a table holding papers, an oil lamp, and a large book. The southern part of the room looks like a small sitting area with four padded chairs. A small table bears a silver tea set on a platter. The north wall offers a back door to the outside.

The door to the outside is usually locked (DC 26 to open).

The papers deal with simple church business, and the book is a ledger. The cabinets also hold papers and documents important to the church (the Church of Lothian's bureaucracy involves a lot of paperwork), but ultimately nothing carries any interest for the PCs. The desk seems to contain mundane stuff but has a single locked drawer (DC 27 to open). Inside is a rolled-up clerical scroll (Brother Heth has no need for it anymore) with the following spells: *cure light wounds, aid,* and *protection from elements.*

The tea set is worth 120 gp.

5. Back Room

The northern corner of this large, L-shaped room holds an ornate wooden cabinet sitting atop a nicely carved wooden table. The southern part of the room is a tidy but cramped storage area for all manner of things. A number of large wooden trestle tables stand piled high with bales of cloth, stacks of dishes, candles, incense, a small tin oil drum, tools, clothing, and more. On the southwestern wall hang more tools and clothing. A wheelbarrow sits in the western corner of the room.

The north corner of this room holds a reliquary (the cabinet), which currently holds 12 vials of holy water. The rest of the room is used for storage and is cleared for meetings and other events.

Development

If Brother Heth and his allies know the PCs are coming with plenty of warning, the Rissard brothers (see Area 7) will be here, with the door to Area 6 open. If intruders enter this room, Norsu the dwarf and Barrol the half-orc barbarian (see below) race down from Area 7 to help. Ideally, however, the Rissard brothers move in to attack as the intruders go up the stairs, thus catching them between themselves and their fellows in Area 7.

6. Stairs

A spiral staircase of wooden planks and iron rails runs up into what is probably this church's tall belfry. The church staff stores a few crates and barrels, covered in dust, in this room as well.

The stairs go up to the level above, Area 7, in the belfry.

7. Six Well-Paid Thugs (EL 8)

This room on the second floor is an empty stairwell, with the spiral staircase running down to the main level (Area 6) and up to the next (Area 12). In these tight quarters, Brother Heth's thugs may attempt to attack intruders.

The Thugs

Norsu Goldenvein is average size for a dwarf, with raven-black hair tied with a golden scarf. She works for Brother Heth alongside Barrol, a half-orc barbarian whom she hates. Barrol is cruel, sadistic, and foul, and practically a giant at 6 feet, 10 inches. They jointly lead a group of human thugs—identical quadruplets all trained with double-bladed swords. These swordsmen call themselves the Eight-Bladed Rissard Brothers and never speak. (Actually, they do, but only to each other.)

These six thugs stay in the rooms on this level (Norsu in Area 8, Barrol in Area 11, and the brothers in Area 10) until Brother Heth has need of them.

Norsu Goldenvein, female dwarf Ftr4: CR 4; Medium humanoid; HD 4d10+16; hp 49; Init +4; Speed 15 feet; AC 15 (+5 armor); Attack +9 melee (2d6+7, greatsword), or +4 ranged (1d6, light crossbow); SV Fort +8, Ref +1, Will +2; AL N; Str 17, Dex 11, Con 18, Int 13, Wis 13, Cha 13

Skills and Feats: Appraise +3, Craft (stonecarving) +7, Handle Animal +5, Jump +3, Listen +3, Search +3, Spot +3, Swim +6; Alertness, Improved Initiative, Power Attack, Weapon Focus (greatsword), Weapon Specialization (greatsword)

Possessions: *+1 greatsword*, masterwork breastplate, light crossbow, 12 bolts, dagger, *potion of haste,* gold ring worth 75 gp

Barrol, male half-orc Bbn4: CR 4; Medium humanoid; HD 4d12+4; hp 47; Init +1; Speed 80 feet; AC 13 (+1 Dex, +2 armor); Attack +9 melee (1d12+6, greataxe), or +5 ranged (1d4+4, dagger); SA Rage; SV Fort +5, Ref +2, Will +1; AL CE; Str 19, Dex 13, Con 13, Int 10, Wis 10, Cha 11

Skills and Feats: Handle Animal +5, Jump +20, Listen +6, Swim +5, Tumble +3, Wilderness Lore +6; Dodge, Power Attack

Possessions: Masterwork greataxe, masterwork leather armor, *boots of striding and springing, bone Quaan ring,* four daggers, 10 gp

The Eight-Bladed Rissard Brothers, human War3 (4): CR 2; Medium humanoids; HD 3d8+6; hp 22; Init +1; Speed 20 feet; AC 17 (+1 Dex, +6 armor); Attack +3/+3 melee (1d8+1, two-bladed sword) or +4 ranged (1d8, longbow); SV Fort +5, Ref +2, Will +2; AL N; Str 13, Dex 13, Con 14, Int 9, Wis 12, Cha 9

Skills and Feats: Listen +3, Spot +3; Ambidexterity, Exotic Weapon Proficiency (two-bladed sword), Two-Weapon Fighting

Possessions: Masterwork two-bladed sword, banded mail armor, masterwork longbow, 20 arrows, *potion of cure light wounds*, 25 gp

8. Norsu's Room

This appears to be a very tidy bedchamber. You see a bed, a small bureau, a table covered with tools and carved stones, a few chairs, and a round rug with an anvil and hammer symbol woven into it.

There is nothing of particular value here. The bureau holds clothing and personal items.

9. Storage

Crates, sacks, barrels, and other containers fill this storage room.

All the listed items are mundane supplies, including some food as well.

10. The Rissard Brothers' Room

Four cots and a wooden ambry furnish this room, along with a long table covered with books and holding a pair of lanterns.

The books here are all about combat techniques and physical training. The ambry holds clothes and personal items.

11. Barrol's Room

This maelstrom of a room might be a bedchamber, but if it is, the person who lives here is probably disturbed. Clothes, broken weapons, tools, food, shoes, rags, blankets, and other things cover a bed, a table, and what are probably a couple of chairs. A target hanging on the wall is full of knives. The place reeks of urine.

A character Searching this room (DC 23) can find a gold ring worth 50 gp amid the clutter.

12. The Guardian (EL 5)

This large area on the third floor looks relatively empty. A suit of full plate armor stands in the northeast corner, and on the floor lies a large rectangular rug of blue and white.

The plate armor is of masterwork quality and sized for a human. The stairs here go down to Area 7 and up to Area 15.

Creatures

A trained basilisk waits here, watching the stairs. Around its neck it wears an iron collar connected to a chain that leads into Area 13. Normally, Brother Heth keeps the creature in Area 13, but if those in the belfry know that intruders are on their way, the disguised Pactlord Ephitas (in Area 14) activates a lever that opens the door into Area 13. She has access to another lever that retracts the chain, pulling the beast into Area 13, and then she can use the first lever to close the door again. The chain is long enough to let the creature move anywhere in this room but not go very far down or up the stairs.

Basilisk: hp 47, AC 16, +8 bite (1d8+3), petrifying gaze (DC 13); see MM, page 23

13. Basilisk Lair

The door into this room can be opened only via a lever in Area 14, although it may already stand open when the PCs arrive. A small flap built into the lower part of the door allows Brother Heth or someone else to slide in food or water for the basilisk, but it's not big enough for the creature to get out.

An acrid smell permeates this room. Bones lie on the floor, well gnawed—many broken. A large water bowl sits near the door. The southern corner houses a large winch connected to a long chain.

14. The Hidden Threat (EL 8)

A short, plump human lies on the floor here, his hands and feet bound. This gagged man appears quite abused. The northeast end of the room is filled with pillows.

Characters can attempt Intelligence checks (DC 15) to remember seeing Vesto Kama around town—particularly if they went to any libraries. If they went to see the loremaster Ishara Jare in Chapter Three, they automatically remember him as her assistant.

While Vesto Kama is indeed a real person, this is not him. This "Vesto" is actually a Pactlord dark naga named Ephitas with both a *change self* and a *misdirection* spell active.

"Vesto" attempts to convince the PCs that he and Ishara Jare were kidnapped and brought here. He says Ishara was taken to some device called the "Dream Probe" to get information out of her about the Banewarrens and the Banewarrens key. He pleads with the characters to help him rescue her. This is all lies, of course.

Ephitas' plan is to lull the PCs into a false sense of security, lead them to Brother Heth, then transform. She uses her continual *detect thoughts* ability to try to confirm whether her ruse is working—but only if she has to. If the ruse doesn't work, there's still no problem: Even the ropes that bind her as "Vesto" won't bother her when she transforms to her normal shape.

Ephitas acts subservient to Brother Heth when she is, in fact (in the eyes of the Pactlords), the real head of this operation. She was once romantically involved with Li, the phasm described in the "Tracking a Kidnap Victim" section earlier in this chapter; they would change shape for all manner of bizarre encounters. Now Li has given up on the relationship, and Ephitas hates the creature. If Li happens to be with the

PCs in disguise when they encounter her (she can recognize Li in any form), she reacts immediately. The Pact of the Quaan prevents her from directly causing the creature harm, but she can give it away by warning the characters that they have a phasm in their midst.

Ephitas, Dark Naga: hp 60, AC 14, +7 sting (2d4+2 plus poison) and +2 bite (1d4+1), *detect thoughts*, immune to mind reading, immune to poison, +2 saves versus charm

Possessions: *Bone Quaan ring* (worn on tail), *headband of intellect +2*

Spells (as 7th-level sorcerer 6/7/7/5): 0—*dancing lights, detect magic, detect poison, ghost sound, light, mage hand, ray of frost*; 1st—*charm person, magic missile, shield, sleep, summon monster I*; 2nd—*invisibility, misdirection, mirror image*; 3rd—*lightning bolt, suggestion*

15. Empty Chamber

Aside from the stairway that leads down to Area 12 or up to Area 18, this room in the center of the third floor is empty.

16. Li's Chamber

This chamber has a strange, acrid stench. A glistening slime covers the floor, refracting light into a rainbow of colors. The room otherwise looks empty.

Li is never here now that it no longer has a relationship with Ephitas (and she hates the phasm).

17. Brother Heth's Chamber

The door to this room is always locked (DC 30 to open). Brother Heth has the key.

This room appears to serve as a bedchamber as well as a practice room. A wooden sparring dummy on a turning base stands in the middle of the northern portion of the room, where all manner of melee weapons hang on the walls amid a few shields. A bed, a dresser, a full-length mirror, a ceramic tub, and a wardrobe furnish the southern portion of the room. A stack of towels and clothing rests upon the dresser. A book lies open on the bed.

The book on the bed is *Fighting Techniques of the Pirate Kingdoms*. All the melee weapons here are simple or martial, and none are masterwork or magical. All are sturdy and serviceable. The dresser and wardrobe hold clothing and personal effects.

Treasure

A secret compartment in the back of the dresser (Search check, DC 20 to find) holds a bag with 294 gp and a *potion of cure moderate wounds*.

18. Top of the Belfry (EL 12)

The top level of this tall church tower measures 60 feet long by 40 feet wide. A staircase on the eastern side of the room spirals downward. On both the longer walls, a 40-foot-wide open balcony looks out over the city.

Rather than the expected church bell, this belfry houses two large devices of arcane and devious nature. One, 5 feet tall and almost that wide, surrounds what appears to be an operating table fitted with iron manacles. Hanging down from the device are fiendish-looking attachments fitted to someone lying on the table. The other device is similar in size to the first and looks like an oven—a large steel contraption surrounding a rounded section fitted with a hinged door.

#6

Show the players illustration #6. The stairs go down to Area 15. The eastern and western sides of the room open onto balconies. The eastern balcony overlooks the slanted chapel roof 60 feet below. The western one overlooks the gorge, 210 feet below.

The two machines are the *probe of dreams* and the *unmaker*.

The Probe of Dreams

The Pactlords of the Quaan have given Heth Neferul, as their main agent in the city, two magical devices to aid him. The first is the *probe of dreams*, a terrible device that puts a victim to sleep, then intrudes upon the character's dreams. Those strapped into this device immediately fall asleep (no saving throw). Of course, elves remain immune to this effect, as they never sleep.

Then, while the character dreams, the *probe* attempts to infiltrate, observe, and even control the dreams to gain information. This extremely difficult work requires the machine's operator to succeed at a Knowledge (arcana) check (DC 20) to gain each piece of information. Basically, if the dreaming character knows the answer to a question the user wants to learn, the operator must make a check with a DC of 20 to get it from the dreamer. If the information is extremely important and secret to the dreamer (DM's discretion), the dreamer gets a Will saving throw (DC 20) to resist. This process takes 1d10 minutes per piece of information.

The user also can implant a single suggestion in the dreamer's mind. This requires a Knowledge (arcana) check (DC 25), and the dreamer gets a Will save (DC 20) to resist. The operator can attempt to implant only one suggestion per dreamer. This process also takes 1d10 minutes.

The Unmaker

The *unmaker*, another gift of the Pactlords of the Quaan, is essentially a *disintegration* machine. A user places an item within the 4-foot-by-4-foot-by-3-foot ovenlike iron chamber and closes the door. Once the user pulls the lever on the side of the device, the item within is *disintegrated* over the course of 6 rounds. Anything that can fit inside the *unmaker*'s interior can be *disintegrated;* magic items gain a saving throw, as described in the *disintegrate* spell. If someone moves the device without the guidance of one of its creators, it explodes, destroying itself and inflicting 10d6 points of damage to all within 30 feet (Reflex save [DC 17] halves).

The explosion creates an area *greater dispelling* effect within that same radius (as if cast by a 20th-level sorcerer). The same thing happens if the surprisingly delicate machine suffers more than 4 points of damage.

If not destroyed, the *unmaker* might prove to be an interesting tool the PCs can use to get rid of some of the banes they might have already found, or that they will find. However, since things *unmade* break down to their essential components, the destruction of a bane would release a lot of negative, evil energy. This energy could potentially taint another item or items in the area (DM's discretion).

Creatures

Brother Heth Neferul was once a devout cleric. He attained a high rank in the Church, not for his skill or faith, but for his intelligence, leadership, and ambition. He grew tired of priestly rites and religious studies and secretly began to train himself martially. Soon he gave up on his religion altogether, but strove to maintain his position in the Church hierarchy. When the Pactlords of the Quaan (specifically Ephitas) approached him, Brother Heth was all too ready to accept their gifts and support in exchange for his loyalty. He has no idea that, eventually, the Pactlords will seek his own death, and the death of all humans.

Trolgir is a bugbear cleric loyal to the bugbear god. He also acts as Brother Heth's right hand. Ironically, he provides just enough spellcasting power to fake Brother Heth's own position occasionally. Blindingly loyal to the Pactlords, Trolgir fights to the death and defends the machines, Yaeshla (the elven dagger; see next page), and Brother Heth with his life.

Brother Heth Neferul, male human Clr4/Ftr7: CR 11; Medium humanoid; HD 4d8+16 + 7d10+28; hp 94; Init +1; Speed 20 feet; AC 21 (+1 Dex, +10 armor); Attack +16/+11 melee (1d8+7, longsword) and +13 melee (1d6+4, light mace); SV Fort +13, Ref +6, Will +10; AL NE; Str 16, Dex 12, Con 18, Int 12, Wis 18, Cha 12

Skills and Feats: Bluff +9, Concentration +5, Diplomacy +7, Gather Information +4, Jump +10, Knowledge (arcana) +10, Knowledge (religion) +8, Listen +4, Spellcraft +9, Spot +4, Swim +4; Ambidexterity, Blind-Fight, Improved Critical (light mace), Lightning Reflexes, Two-Weapon Fighting, Weapon Focus (longsword), Weapon Focus (light mace), Weapon Specialization (longsword), Weapon Specialization (light mace)

Possessions: *+2 longsword, +1 light mace*, *+1 dagger* (Yaeshla—see below), *+2 full plate, chime of interruption, bone Quaan ring, potions of bull's strength, barkskin, levitate, cure serious wounds, lesser restoration*, and *haste* (all clearly labeled), two thunderstones, gold pocket watch (worth 250 gp), 54 gp, 98 sp, key to his room (Area 17)

Trolgir, male bugbear Clr5: CR 7; Medium humanoid; HD 3d8+3 + 5d8+5; hp 40; Init +3 (+3 Dex); Speed 20 feet; AC 21 (+3 Dex, +3 natural, +5 armor); Attack +9 melee (1d8+3, morningstar), or +8 ranged (1d6+3, javelin); SV Fort +7, Ref +8, Will +6; AL NE; Str 17, Dex 16, Con 12, Int 10, Wis 13, Cha 9

Skills and Feats: Climb +2, Concentration +9, Hide +2, Knowledge (arcana) +3, Knowledge (religion) +6, Listen +4, Move Silently +2, Spot +4; Alertness, Brew Potion, Dodge

Possessions: Masterwork breastplate, masterwork morningstar, *wand of cure light wounds* (28 charges), *bone Quaan ring, potions of bull's strength, endurance, remove paralysis, hiding, protection from elements, aid*, and *cure serious wounds,* two javelins, flask of acid, flask of alchemist's fire, 48 gp, holy symbol, jeweled silver bracer worth 100 gp

Cleric Domains: Trickery, War

Spells (5/4+1/2+1/1+1)**:** 0—*cure minor wounds, detect magic, light, mending, read magic*; 1st—*bless, doom, divine favor, magic weapon, shield of faith*; 2nd—*cure moderate wounds, endurance, invisibility*; 3rd—*dispel magic, magic vestment*

Tactics

If given time to prepare, Brother Heth drinks his *potions of bull's strength, barkskin,* and *levitate*. Meanwhile Trolgir casts *magic weapon, divine favor, endurance,* and *magic vestment* on himself, then *shield of faith* on Brother Heth. Right before the enemy arrives, Brother Heth drinks his *potion of haste*, while Trolgir casts *invisibility* on himself, then *bless.*

If they accomplish these preparations, add +2 to Brother Heth's attacks and damage, and +7 to his Armor Class, while adding +2 to Trolgir's attack and damage, +1 to his Fortitude save, +8 to hit points, and +1 to his Armor Class. Both also get an additional +1 bonus to attack from the *bless*.

In a fight, Brother Heth starts out by using his *chime of interruption,* then engages in melee. Trolgir sticks close to Heth invisibly and heals him with his wand, unless it becomes clear that it would be better to engage in combat himself. Trolgir also concerns himself (probably too much) with defending the machines from harm.

The Battle

The fight at the top of the belfry has all the ingredients for a climactic battle. If the *unmaker* sustains damage, it explodes, blowing the roof off the belfry and a hole in the floor (causing the *probe of dreams* to fall through the floor to the level below), and probably freeing the elven dagger Yaeshla from the enchantment that makes her the Pactlords' evil servant. If this happens, she immediately cries out to the PCs for aid.

Meanwhile, Brother Heth moves out to fight on the balcony (Area 19), attempting to use the height to distract and worry his foes. His *potion of levitation*, if still active, keeps him free from worry. In fact, if he becomes seriously wounded or needs to escape, he can step off the edge, float down (or up) a bit to get away, and drink a healing potion. Or, he can use *levitation* to try to escape down into the King's River Gorge.

A battle at the top of a burning tower, more 200 feet above a yawning chasm, is the kind of thing that great game stories are made of.

Yaeshla, the Elven Dagger

Yaeshla appears to be a long-hafted dagger, with a simple steel blade and a silver-and-blue hilt with white diamonds set around the pommel. She has an enhancement bonus of +1, but no additional powers other than her intelligence. An aura of evil and enchantment surrounds her, but that is not her true nature, only a spell effect she carries. This spell can be removed by *dispel magic* (the spell that affects her was cast by a 10th-level caster) or similar magic.

"Yaeshla" is actually only the hilt (the blade was added later) of this dagger. She once was the haft of an ancient magical staff known as the *staff of shards*, a weapon sundered in the final battle against Eslathagos Malkith. The staff, created specifically to fight the Dread One, is the only thing that can destroy the hand of Danar/Malkith: the Banewarrens key.

Yaeshla is happy to tell her tale: how she (the staff) was created by the finest elven artisans and imbued with the soul of an ailing elf child whose body was failing. Now that child seems quite content to live on in this form, but she longs to regain her true destiny as the *staff of shards*. After the staff was broken in battle against the Dread One, her owner, an elf wizard named Maeritha Moonrise, fled with Yaeshla and one other piece of the staff, a rodlike midsection. For even though Eslathagos Malkith had fallen, contingent magical wards in his fortress threatened her and her comrades. The bottom tip of the staff was left in the deepest portion of Jabel Shammar—the top of the Banewarrens—known as the Dread One's Path. The whole place was sealed behind them. Maeritha believed there was no way to reunite all the portions of the staff.

Yaeshla wanted to stay useful even in her limited form, so Maeritha gave her to her apprentice, a half-dragon elf named Thurnuin. Thurnuin gave Yaeshla the blade she now holds and kept her at his side. After Maeritha passed away, Yaeshla witnessed Thurnuin's gathering of some rather surprising comrades in the secret extradimensional realm his master had created: the Quaan.

Thurnuin's companions were a beholder named Charch-Pahn, a mind flayer named Ilaprisarol and a black dragon that called itself Father Claw. Together, the four of them swore a Pact to work together from the pocket dimension of the Quaan to eliminate the hated humanoids "infesting" the world. (Yaeshla remains uncertain whether Thurnuin was always evil, fooling even Maeritha, or if something corrupted him toward the end. She did, however, come to learn that Thurnuin's anti-humanoid feelings sprang from the ridicule he received due to his draconic heritage.)

Centuries passed, and the Pactlords grew in power. Father Claw left (characters who succeed at a Knowledge [religion] check with a DC of 15 recognize the name "Father Claw" as a minor evil draconic deity), and many other original members died. As far as she knows, only Charch-Pahn still lives, a shriveled husk of a beholder. Yaeshla herself was ensorcelled so she would operate as a spy for the Pactlords, her will subverted to darkness. She was passed around from owner to owner among the Pactlords of the Quaan and their servants until she was given as a "gift" to Brother Heth Neferul for his service—actually, she was really there to observe his actions and report back to her true masters.

Now free of her enchantment and the Pactlords' influence, Yaeshla wants nothing more than to rejoin the other portions of the *staff of shards*. She knows that a portal to the Quaan exists in Area 19 (see below), and she knows that one-third of the staff lies in the Black Manor in that extradimensional realm. She feels pretty sure that the other part remains in the Banewarrens, close to Jabel Shammar, the fortress at the top of the Spire. She gladly accompanies the PCs and gives them information when she can. She does not remember any specifics of her time as the *staff of shards* (she knows nothing of the Banewarrens layout, for example), but she has a lot of background about the Quaan and the Pactlords.

New Information

With the information supplied by Yaeshla, the PCs now probably have the basics of what they need to know to reseal the Banewarrens. They have probably heard of the sealing rod, *and now they know how to permanently destroy the key using the* staff of shards. *Of course, assembling the staff requires them to open and explore the farthest reaches of the Banewarrens. If they convey this information to either the Inverted Pyramid or the Church of Lothian, these groups encourage the characters to press on to obtain the assembled staff and the* sealing rod. *If the Pactlords or the Vladaams learn this information, they seek to stop the PCs from obtaining either item.*

If the player characters have the Banewarrens key, they can destroy it with the *staff of shards* as soon as they have recombined all three portions. However, it's more likely that Navanna Vladaam still has the key. The PCs will have to deal with her at some point.

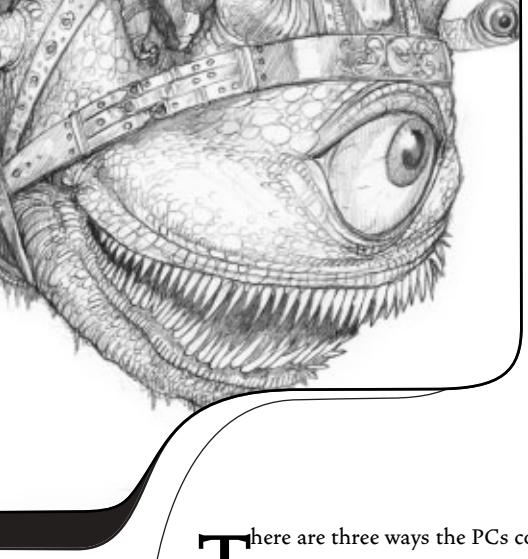
19. The Precarious Ledge

The western balcony atop the belfry hangs over the city's wall at the edge of the cliffs, and thus over the King's River Gorge itself. The drop from the balcony is 210 feet.

This is also the location of a magical portal to the Quaan, used by the Pactlords to get to that extradimensional realm from the city. (A portal to the city exists in the Quaan in the Tower of Charch-Pahn—see Chapter Seven—and leads back to Area 18 of the belfry.) This portal lies just at the southeastern edge of the ledge. It is practically invisible, but a Spot check (DC 18) allows a character to notice a strange distortion in the air. A character actually Searching the ledge need only succeed at a check with a DC of 12 to notice something very strange there. Anyone stepping off the ledge at the portal's location ends up at the Arrival Point in the Quaan, as described in the next chapter.

Development

Brother Heth may attempt to draw out the battle to this balcony. He may even use the portal to escape to the Quaan, although he's a little afraid to do so—he's never actually been there.



Portal to the Quaan

The Quaan is an extradimensional realm created long ago by an elf wizard named Maeritha Moonrise. Maeritha is long dead, and the Pactlords have long since taken the Quaan for their own. Once a realm hidden in the Heartwood of all trees, the Quaan is now a place of dried and shriveled branches and stinking, fetid bogs.

There are three ways the PCs could end up in the Quaan. The first is by using the portal on the ledge at the top of the Chapel of St. Thessina's belfry in Chapter Six. The second is via the *portable portal* possessed by Saarachk in Chapter Eight. Lastly, they may come here using their own means (a *plane shift* spell, for example) because they have investigated how to destroy the Banewarrens key and learned that the only way to do so involves using the *staff of shards*, a piece of which is here. Either Jevicca Norr of the Inverted Pyramid or an official of the Church of Lothian, for example, could provide a *plane shift* spell to get the PCs here.

Effects of the Quaan

The Quaan has some strange aspects that affect game play. The gloom and gray haze that permeates the place in its continual twilight state reduces real visibility to about 200 feet—even if a flying character takes to the air to get a better view of something. Large structures, such as the Black Manor or the Tower of Charch-Pahn (see below) can be seen from much farther off, but with little detail.

The Quaan affects magic. Spells like *rope trick, dimension door, ethereal jaunt,* and *etherealness,* which access the Ethereal Plane, do not work. *Plane shift, gate, summon monster,* and plane-related spells that do not deal directly with the Ethereal Plane work normally. One cannot *scry* creatures in the Quaan from the material plane.

Much more significant, however, is the fact that the very flow of magic grants a jolt of power to the caster. Anyone casting a spell or using an inherent (not from an item) spell-like ability (not a supernatural ability) gains a +1 luck bonus to their next d20 roll. This bonus does not stack with itself, so a character who casts two spells before making a die roll gains only a +1 bonus.

Arrival

As the Quaan is a completely different plane of existence than the material plane, the DM should take pains to reinforce its alien nature.

You find yourself in a dismal, cold swamp, the likes of which you've never seen before. Pools of stagnant, mossy water gather in the soft, damp earth. Dark black moss coats gray trees like teary burdens. Sickly violet tendrils slither up out of the muck. Even the air possesses a faded, gray hue, like a gauzy curtain of mist. The chill and damp grip you cloyingly. The place stinks of decay, death, and stale air and water. A few insects buzz around your head, and the ground appears alive with beetles, grubs, worms, and things you can't quite identify.

Although it is generally cold in the Quaan (only a few degrees above freezing), here and there explorers find warm areas, heated from below. Beneath the surface of the Quaan is a bubbling miasma of supernaturally heated water and mud. In some places, this heat reaches the surface. In others, the hot, bubbling mud does. Where this happens, the hot mud usually brings chunks of raw andrecite with it (see sidebar).

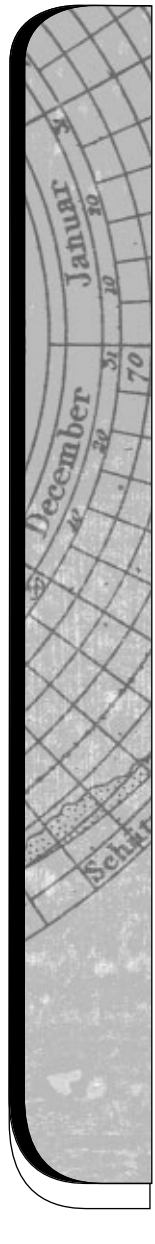
Characters never feel any wind here. Light is a continual twilight glow; nothing resembling actual sunlight ever appears here, so creatures damaged by sunlight risk nothing walking about the plane.

Bone Rings

Any characters wearing a *bone Quaan ring* upon arriving in the Quaan instantly know the direction to the Font of the Pact (see page 72). They may not know what exactly this compulsion is leading them to, just that something "important" lies in that direction.

Random Encounters

The Encounter Level for each of these random encounters varies, but most range from EL 3 to 6. Thus, most of them add a bit of flavor to the locale, and a hint of danger, but only a few present any real challenge to the PCs. Each hour, check for normal encounters, with a 10 percent chance. After the player characters have encountered any of the Pactlords in the plane, however, you should check twice each hour, each attempt with a 10 percent chance; the second check is



for "Pactlord Alert Encounters." After each successful encounter roll, roll again on the appropriate table below to determine who—or what—the characters meet.

Nonthreatening encounters with normal insects, the occasional bat, snake, or even crocodile, occur very frequently.

Normal Encounters

d%	Result
01–05	Darkmantles (1d4+3)
06–10	Manticore
11–15	Will-o-wisp
16–22	Giant constrictor snake
23–30	Gricks (1d2)
31–35	Dire boar
36–40	Giant crocodile
41–47	Gray ooze
48–52	Violet fungi (1d2+1)
53–56	Medium monstrous centipedes (1d4+4)
57–60	Giant stag beetles (1d2)
61–63	Gargantuan monstrous centipede
64–69	Sinking bog hole
70–72	Steaming bog pool
73–76	Pactlord andrecite gatherers
77–78	Escaped slave
79–85	Green slime
86–92	Brown mold
93–94	Black pudding
95–96	Aboleth
97–98	Dragon turtle
99–00	Pactlord patrol (trolls and ogre-mage)

Pactlord Alert Encounters

d%	Result
01–10	Darkmantles (1d4+3)
11–20	Manticore
21–30	Will-o-wisp
31–40	Gricks (1d2)
41–50	Aboleth
51–70	Dragon turtle
71–00	Pactlord patrol (trolls and ogre mage)

Encounter Details

Some of the results above merit further description below.

Sinking Bog Hole

The soggy ground under the PCs' feet gives way to a soupy mess. All must make Reflex saving throws (DC 20) or they get sucked into the choking, thick morass. A character who does not succeed at a Swim check (DC 18) will drown in 1d3 rounds. (See the DMG, page 85.) The bog holes usually stretch 15 to 25 feet across. Treat this as Encounter Level 4. This encounter can also occur in a dismal lake (see next page).

Steaming Bog Pool

The warm, wet ground under the PCs' feet begins to bubble and spurt as the boiling liquid beneath the surface works its way up. The pools usually measure 10 to 20 feet in diameter. Roll percentile dice again. On a roll of 01 to 25, the bubbling pool already exists, and the player characters see it clearly and can avoid it. With a roll of 26 to 75, the bubbling pool forms near the group. Each character suffers 1d4 points of heat damage. On a roll of 76 to 00, the pool bubbles up directly under the PCs. Everyone must make a Reflex saving throw (DC 20) or they are blasted by the boiling mud, then drawn into the cloying morass of the pool. This is just like a sinking bog hole except that those caught within it also suffer 10d6 points of heat damage per round. Treat this latter occurrence as Encounter Level 8. This encounter can occur in a dismal lake (see next page).

There is a 35 percent chance that the formation of a new pool brings up 1d20 lbs. of andrecite (many small stones).

Andrecite

Andrecite looks quite a bit like diamonds in the rough. Only an Appraisal check (DC 25) lets a character distinguish the difference. Raw andrecite stones, found in the bubbling pits of the Quaan, are worth about 10 gp per pound. Cut and polished (using the same processes as diamonds), this gem is worth double the value of a diamond of equivalent size—assuming the buyer is familiar with andrecite and doesn't just think it is a diamond.

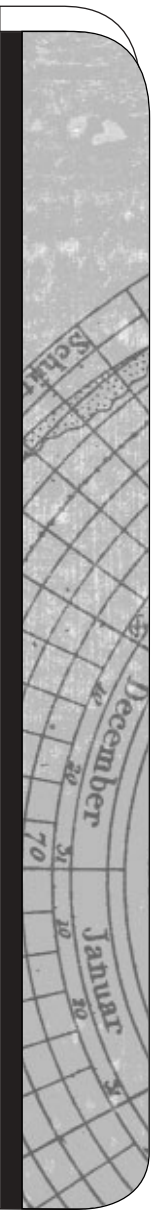
Andrecite can help power almost any spell. If a caster adds andrecite worth 100 gp per spell level to the material components of a spell, treat that spell as empowered (per the metamagic feat, although the spell level does not change). A successful Knowledge (arcana) check (DC 25) allows a character to recall these properties of the stone.

But that's not all; 300 gp worth of powdered, refined andrecite, consumed by a living creature (usually in food or water) adds a +4 enhancement bonus to a randomly assigned ability score for 1d4 hours.

Pactlord Andrecite Gatherers

The Pactlords send a special team of slaves and a harpy named Azz from the Tower of Charch-Pahn across the plane to gather valuable andrecite brought up by the hot, bubbling mud pools. Azz has perfected and changed her captivating song ability to allow her to effectively Intimidate those who have fallen victim to her song, cowing them into obeying her commands. She can do this as though she had an Intimidate bonus of +15, but only on those who have been captivated at least a full minute—thus, this is not a battle tactic. However, it does allow her to lead groups of slaves without much chance of disobedience. When gathering andrecite, she has 1d4+6 humanoid slaves with her (50 percent are human, 20 percent elf, 15 percent dwarf, 10 percent halfling, 10 percent gnome, 3 percent half-elf, 2 percent half-orc), each carrying 1d20 lbs. of andrecite.

If attacked, Azz prefers to fly just above opponents and rain down point-blank, rapid-shot arrows. The slaves, for the most part, stand motionless, defending themselves if attacked. Azz works directly for Charch-Pahn the beholder.



Azz, harpy Ftr4: CR 8; Medium monstrous humanoid; HD 7d8 + 4d10; hp 78; Init +4; Speed 20 feet; AC 20 (+4 Dex, +1 natural, +5 armor); Attack +15/+10/+5 melee (longsword), or +15/+10/+5/+15 ranged (1d8+8+1d6 within 30 feet, composite longbow); SA Captivating song; SV Fort +6, Ref +10, Will +6; AL NE; Str 18, Dex 18, Con 11, Int 8, Wis 10, Cha 15

Skills and Feats: Bluff +8, Hide +5, Listen +7, Move Silently +4, Perform +9, Spot +6; Dodge, Flyby Attack, Great Fortitude, Point Blank Shot, Rapid Shot, Weapon Focus (composite longbow), Weapon Specialization (longbow)

Possessions: *+1 sonic mighty longbow* (+4), *+1 chain shirt, bone Quaan ring, potion of endurance,* 40 masterwork arrows (in two quivers), longsword, 32 gp, silver ring with an opal worth 320 gp, key to the chest in the Tower of Charch-Pahn

Captivating song: 300-foot spread, Will save (DC 15) avoids. Victims stand motionless before the harpy, waiting to be slain or Intimidated.

Escaped Slave

A humanoid of a random race (50% are human, 20% elf, 15% dwarf, 10% halfling, 10% gnome, 3% half-elf, 2% half-orc) has escaped the clutches of the Pactlords and now roams the Quaan, barely alive. This slave may have a crude, makeshift weapon. If the PCs make a Diplomacy check (DC 12), the slave can tell them the general direction to any of the major sites in the Quaan (see map) and give them basic information about any of them.

Pactlord Patrol

An ogre mage and two trolls patrol the wilderness looking for escaped slaves. They attack any non-Pactlords they encounter.

Ogre Mage: hp 40, AC 20, +8 greatsword (2d8+5), 10-foot reach, spell-like abilities (*darkness* and *invisibility* at will, *charm person, cone of cold, gaseous form, polymorph self,* and *sleep* 1x/day), regeneration 2, SR 18; see MM, page 144

Possessions: Masterwork huge greatsword, *bone Quaan ring*, masterwork chain shirt, 49 gp, diamond earring worth 500 gp

Trolls (2): hp 60, 73, AC 18, +9 claws (1d6+6, 2 attacks) and +4 bite (1d6+3), rend (2d6+9, regeneration 5, scent; see MM, page 180

Possessions: *Bone Quaan ring*

Topography

Bog holes and pools aren't the only topographical hazards the PCs face as they explore this extradimensional plane.

The Dismal Lakes

Half or more of the Quaan is covered by water. This water is still, stagnant, and teems with algae, floating clumps of moss and slime, insects, fish, and snakes. Its depth ranges from 2 to 5 feet, although occasionally one may find much deeper treacherous holes or soft spots in the lake bed. The inhabitants of the plane have no compunction against wading or swimming across these lakes—they almost never worry about "going around." Creatures move at half speed in this muddy, murky mess.

The Green Slime

Green slime grows in abundance in the Quaan. Aside from scattered "normal-sized" patches, however, explorers will find fantastically large masses of the stuff growing here. As marked on the map, these patches measure about 300 feet wide and stretch like snaky tendrils for miles across the landscape. These masses, which grow to 35 feet or more in height, might be mistaken for a line of moss-covered trees or other thick vegetation from far away.

Touching—or even coming within 5 feet of—these massive patches is dangerous. A character doing so automatically becomes affected by the horrible stuff. The character suffers 1d6 points of temporary Constitution damage per round. On the first round of contact, the slime can be scraped off (most likely destroying the scraping device), but after that it must be frozen, burned, or cut away (applying damage to the victim as well). Extreme cold or heat, sunlight, or a *cure disease* spell destroys the green slime on a character. Against wood or metal, green slime deals 2d6 points of damage per round, ignoring metal's hardness but not that of wood. It does not harm stone.

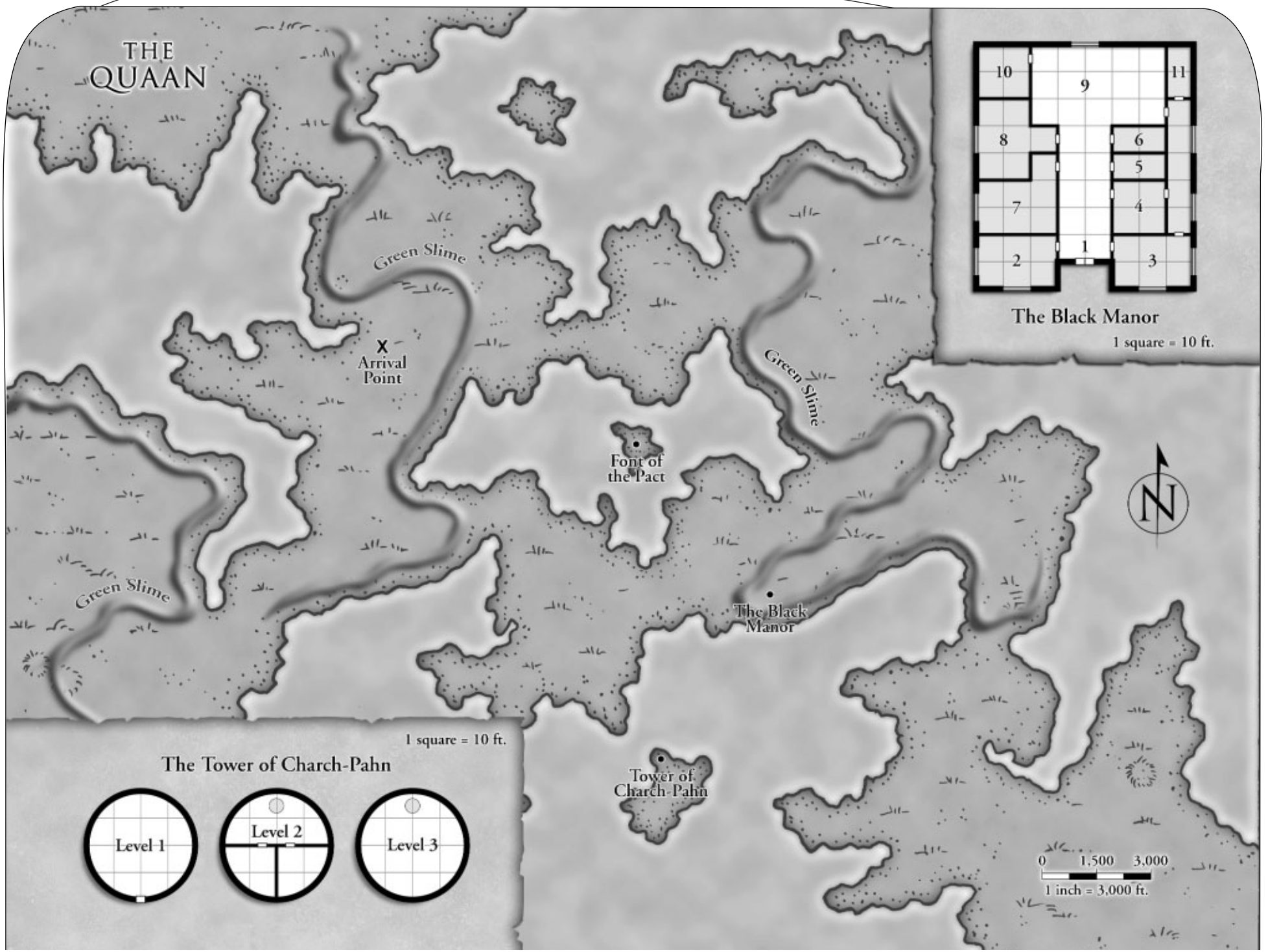
If any of the above methods (fire, cold, *cure disease*, etc.) are used against these huge patches of slime, they affect roughly a 5-foot cube of the stuff. In the case of spells with an area, such as a *cone of cold* or a *fireball,* the green slime in the area is destroyed, but no more.

Font of the Pact

Near the center of the Quaan is the Font of the Pact, a large gargoyle-covered fountain made of onyx and gold. This magical fountain is the source of the Pact's powers—it is what binds and keeps the Pactlords together.

On a shallow hill surrounded on all sides by bleak murk stands a tall stone sculpture. It rises up from the middle of a round, stone-rimmed pool at least 20 feet in diameter. The sculpture resembles nothing that you can discern, but its abstract nature carries an aura of menace. Many deceptively sharp edges, points, and hooked portions encircle the sculpture's central core, which rises about 40 feet into the air.

Anyone wearing a *bone Quaan ring* who drinks from the clear water in the font is healed of 3d8 points of damage, but the wearer can access this boon only once per day. Further, anyone wearing a *bone ring* who steps into the pool must


THE QUAAN
Green Slime
Arrival Point
Green Slime
Font of the Pact
Green Slime
The Black Manor
Tower of Charch-Pahn
10
9
11
8
6
5
7
4
1
2
3
The Black Manor
1 square = 10 ft.
N
1 square = 10 ft.
The Tower of Charch-Pahn
Level 1
Level 2
Level 3
0 1,500 3,000
1 inch = 3,000 ft.

make a Will saving throw (DC 20) or become a part of the Pact. A member of the Pact cannot willingly bring harm upon another member of the Pact.

Lastly, Pactlords who stand within the pool can use it to *scry* anyone wearing a *bone Quaan ring*, even if that person is not known to them. For example, a Pactlord could *scry* "Yuinthu or anyone wearing Yuinthu's ring."

Encounters

If the PCs spend much time around the Font, they run a 30 percent chance each hour of a Pactlord Alert Encounter , regardless of whether the Pactlords are alerted to their presence.

Tower of Charch-Pahn (EL 14)

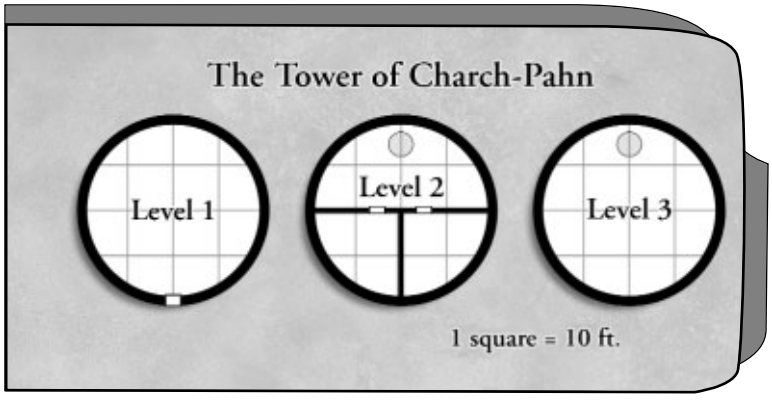
#7

Charch-Pahn is a wizened beholder who dwells here in the Quaan. It is one of the oldest Pactlords, and a respected leader among their ranks. Exploring its tower proves extremely dangerous. **Show the players illustration #7.**

A Hidden Ally

The PCs, however, are not entirely alone as they face the evil of the Pactlords—at least, they don't have to be. A couatl named Xichlanatlazochtal currently hides within the Quaan to learn more about her enemy, Charch-Pahn. Charch-Pahn attacked and killed Xichlan's brood long ago. Since then, the couatl has sworn to make the beholder pay for its crimes. She has already entered the tower once (using two *dispel magics* to get through *arcane locked* doors, so she is down two 3rd-level spell slots). Inside, she encountered Charch-Pahn's servant, an annis, on Level 2. She killed the hag, then fled back out of the tower before the beholder could get involved. In the battle, they damaged some magical device, but Xichlan doesn't know what it was.

Now Xichlan hides, invisibly, in the moss-covered trees near the tower. If she sees non-Pactlords about, she approaches them when it appears safe and uses her psionic alignment detection abilities to determine if they are evil. If they are good-aligned, she makes her presence known.



Suddenly appearing in front of you, a creature of unsurpassed yet inhuman beauty floats on feathery, multicolored wings. Glistening, colorful scales cover her long serpentine body. "If you are not friends of the Pactlords of the Quaan," she says in a stern but melodious voice, "then you have nothing to fear from me. You seem in need of aid. Please, allow me to help you."

Xichlan uses her spells to heal the PCs' wounds. She even uses her *plane shift* power to take them back to Ptolus if they need more help than she can offer. She offers this assistance thinking the grateful characters will then aid her in attacking Charch-Pahn.

Xichlan has seen Azz and the slaves come and go from this place (see the random encounters above) with sacks of rocks.

Xichlanatlazochtal, couatl: hp 57, AC 15, +12 bite (1d3+6 plus poison), spells, psionics, constrict (2d8+6), *ethereal jaunt*, telepathy; see MM, page 38

Spells (as a 9th-level sorcerer, 6/7/7/7/4): 0—*dancing lights, detect magic, detect poison, disrupt undead, ghost sound, light, mage hand, open/close*; 1st—*cure light wounds, charm person, magic missile, obscuring mist, shield*; 2nd—*blur, cure moderate wounds, mirror image, silence*; 3rd—*blink, dispel magic, lightning bolt*; 4th—*holy smite, wall of ice*

The Tower

The Tower of Charch-Pahn, made of 2-foot-thick black stone, stands 250 feet high. The bronze doors both inside and outside the tower are round and measure 7 feet in diameter (hardness 8, 50 hit points, Break DC 26). All the doors are sealed with *arcane locks*, negated by the beholder's antimagic cone, then easily pushed open. There are no windows.

Level 1

The tower's first level rises 200 feet high—basically it's just a tall shaft 40 feet in diameter. On the ceiling is a bronze door that gives access to Level 2. The walls have a Climb DC of 20.

Within the black structure you see little of note, except a glowing bronze symbol 3 feet across directly opposite the door. The ceiling is far above you, lost in the darkness.

The symbol is a magical device for cutting and shaping raw andrecite. It instantly fashions any amount of the material into a beautiful gemstone. Each pound of raw andrecite turns into a gem worth 100 gp, so a piece weighing 4 lbs. becomes a 400 gp gem.

Level 2

This level is 20 feet high and contains three different rooms. Xichlan fought the annis hag in the northernmost room.

A body lies on the ground, obviously burned as well as beaten. It looks as though it was a gigantic woman, with deep blue skin and wild black hair. Near this corpse, a tall brass pedestal fitted with blue stones holds a crystalline sphere at its top. The pedestal measures about 3 feet tall, the sphere about 6 inches across. The brass is blacked and the sphere appears cracked. The ceiling bears a bronze door directly above the one on the floor.

The device was an experimental *crystal ball* that allowed the user to access the senses of someone being *scried*. Now it is damaged, however. If anyone so much as touches it, the crystal bursts with a magical pulse that affects every creature within 500 feet, regardless of line of sight (so Charch-Pahn, in the level above, also falls within its range). Everyone in that area must make Fortitude saving throws (DC 24). Failure means that one's senses are transferred to someone else who failed the saving throw. If only one creature fails the save, there is no effect.

Characters with transferred senses see, hear, smell, and feel through another character. If Character A uses Character B's senses, he sees through B's eyes and hears through his ears. Character A still controls his own actions, as does Character B. A character operating with someone else's senses suffers a –4 circumstance penalty to Armor Class, attack rolls, all checks, and Reflex saving throws. If Character B is not even in the same room as Character A, A is considered blind and deaf to what's going on in his own room and still suffers the –4 penalty from the disorientation.

If a character undergoes this sensory transference, it is not immediately obvious whose senses the character is actually using. If Charch-Pahn's senses are transferred to a PC, that character won't realize it instantly but may figure it out. (Closing one's eyes is a good strategy once you know an enemy is seeing through them.) The transfer of senses is an instantaneous effect. It cannot be dispelled or suppressed, but it wears off after about an hour.

Treasure

The dead hag wears *boots of flying* and has two *javelins of lightning*.

Development

If Charch-Pahn hears commotion down here, or if a sense transfer takes place, the beholder comes down into this chamber from above to deal with the intruders.

The southwest room is for andrecite storage. Characters find 20 lbs. of raw andrecite here, as well as a locked and trapped chest (DC 27 to open) full of cut gemstones. Unless opened with the proper key (Azz has it), the chest sprays poison gas. Inside are 10 gems worth 100 gp each, eight gems worth 200 gp each, five gems worth 300 gp each, one 400 gp gem, and one 500 gp gem. The chest also holds two containers, each bearing 300 gp in powdered andrecite.

Poison Gas Trap: CR 10; burnt othur fumes (1 point of Constitution drain, 3d6 points of temporary Constitution damage a minute later); Fortitude save (DC 18); Search (DC 21); Disable Device (DC 25)

The southeast room on this level is Azz's lair (see "Random Encounters," above). For a particularly challenging encounter, if the PCs haven't already defeated her elsewhere, place Azz here so she can aid her master, Charch-Pahn.

Feathers cover the floor, amid dark gray droppings. An acrid smell fills your nostrils. An iron bar positioned about 10 feet from the floor reaches from wall to wall, like a huge perch. Two quivers full of arrows hang from the perch.

Azz keeps most of her belongings with her. The two quivers hold 20 masterwork arrows each.

Level 3

The ceiling in the tower's third level is 30 feet high.

The black stone walls on this top level of the tower have a complex, abstract, grooved pattern running through them. The room appears empty.

This is Charch-Pahn's lair. The pattern is a design of its creation. The south part of the wall bears a secret panel, however (Search, DC 20), which slides down easily. Behind it is a permanent, one-way portal to Ptolus: specifically, to the top level of the Chapel of St. Thessina's belfry (Chapter Six, Area 18).

Switching Senses

DMs should play up the sensory transference effect for all it's worth. A fighter wants to attack the beholder, but his comrade, whose senses he is using, runs out of the room—now the fighter can't see the beholder! He can't even hear himself cursing in frustration! Worse yet, someone transferred to Charch-Pahn's senses will be stunned for 1d3 rounds as she is overwhelmed by the beholder's all-around vision.

Creature

Charch-Pahn dwells here. The creature has grown weary, wrinkled, and withered, and has lost all real motivation to destroy humanoids. Thus, if PCs wish to, they can attempt to reason with the beholder using a Diplomacy check (DC 20). If they do not take any of Charch-Pahn's andrecite, or anything else from the tower, the creature shows them the portal and lets them go home. Otherwise, it defends itself and its tower, fighting to the death once battle is joined.

Charch-Pahn, Beholder: hp 74, AC 20, +7 ray (*charm person, charm monster, sleep, flesh to stone, disintegrate, fear, slow, inflict moderate wounds, finger of death*, or *telekinesis*) +2 bite (2d4), antimagic cone, all-around vision; see MM, page 24

Possessions: *Bone Quaan ring* (on an eyestalk)

The Black Manor (EL 14)

The Black Manor southeast of the Font serves as the headquarters for the Pactlords of the Quaan. This single story structure is about 20 feet tall with a flat roof. It is made of black stone walls about a foot thick, both interior and exterior. The windows are positioned about 15 feet up the walls, making it difficult for anyone to look in; ladderlike rungs on the inside allow the inhabitants to climb up and look out. Interior and exterior doors are made of stone (hardness 8, 60 hit points, Break DC 28).

Only some Pactlords actually live in the manor, and even they come by only infrequently. Still, even with just a few guards and inhabitants, this is a dangerous place.

1. Entry Hall

A long, black hallway with numerous doors stretches north and south. The silver etched pattern on the floor depicts all sorts of inhuman monsters—things with claws, wings, tentacles, and even stranger parts.

Near the north end of this hall, about 45 feet from the manor's main doors, a behir waits, the primary guardian of the Black Manor. If intruders enter, it breathes, then moves to engage, calling for the ogre guard to come to its aid.

Behir: hp 99, AC 16, +15 bite (2d4+8) and +10 claws (1d4+4, six attacks), breath weapon (7d6 points of damage, DC 19), improved grab, swallow whole, constrict (2d8+8), electrical immunity, scent; see MM, page 24
Possessions: *Bone Quaan ring*

Development

If a fight starts in this hallway, the ogres in Areas 2 and 3 come out and engage the intruders in melee, hoping to swarm over them in a "pincer movement."

2. Guards

This is a disheveled room, filled with crates and barrels arranged to make furniture. A crude plank-atop-boxes table holds a large keg, a number of mugs, a platter covered with bones and smeared blood, and a few knives and cleavers.

This is a guard room for four ogre Pactslaves. One tries to keep watch out the windows while the others relax. Occasionally they get to go out and hunt for food. If they hear any trouble (Listen +2), they respond quickly.

Ogres (4)**:** hp 23, 25, 31, 34, AC 16, +8 greatclub (2d6+7), 10-foot reach; see MM, page 144
Possessions: Greatclub, *bone Quaan ring,* hide armor, 13 sp, 10 gp

3. Guards

Although this room holds a few large, crude wooden chairs and a fair number of boxes and crates, someone has shoved them all up against the walls to clear a wide space in the middle. On the floor are a number of scratch marks, some bone dice, and various copper, silver, and gold coins.

This is a guard room for four ogre Pactslaves. One tries to keep watch out the windows while the others play. Occasionally they get to go out and hunt for food. If they hear any trouble (Listen +2), they respond quickly. There are 98 cp, 76 sp, and 21 gp on the floor.

Ogres (4)**:** hp 25, 26, 30, 32, AC 16, +8 greatclub (2d6+7), 10-foot reach; see MM, page 144
Possessions: *Bone Quaan ring,* greatclub, hide armor, 13 sp, 10 gp

4. Storage

This room is filled with sacks, crates, barrels, kegs, tools, weapons, and various materials such as cloth, rope, leather, nails, and so on.

This is all mundane equipment and food. Characters find nothing of real value here.

5. Ostarach's Chamber

An 11-foot-long bed, a large chest, and a bookshelf with a few books furnish this room.

This is the chamber of Ostarach the ogre-mage (see Chapter Five). The locked chest (DC 20 to open) contains large clothing, a chain shirt (fitted for an ogre-mage), two flasks of acid, and a pouch with 592 gp. The books are basic writings on magic. (Ostarach wants to learn real wizardry.)

6. Yuinthu's Chamber

The only thing in this room is a large square pillow in the middle of the floor. Abstract red and purple paintings cover the walls.

This chamber, belonging to Yuinthu the mind flayer (see Chapter Five), contains nothing of value.

7. Sarth and S'Errit's Chamber

This room lies in utter disarray. There are two beds here, but each is covered with so much clothing, armor, gear, and refuse that it is difficult to tell anything else.

This is the chamber of Sarth and S'Errit, a bugbear fighter and a lizardfolk cleric. (See the event in Chapter Ten.) A Search of the room (DC 20) allows a character to find: a flask of alchemist's fire, a masterwork longsword, 35 scattered gold pieces, a silver hair clasp worth 75 gp, and a pair of large boots fitted with small sapphires and silver woven threads worth 450 gp.

8. Zsavri's Chamber

The interior of this chamber is painted dark green in a stippled pattern that looks like leaves or scales. A wicker basket, 7 feet across, lies in the middle of the floor. Its cover is flipped open, revealing blankets and pillows inside. Animal skulls and other bones hang from the ceiling on leather cords.

The basket serves as a bed for Zsavri, a yuan-ti abomination. Hidden in the blankets are a masterwork sickle, a *potion of invisibility*, and a pouch containing three emeralds, each worth 500 gp. The window here 15 feet up the wall is hinged to make it easy for Zsavri to slip out (but it cannot be opened from the outside).

Creatures

Zsavri has adapted to the Quaan better than any other Pactlord. She loves it here. Thus, the others generally think of her as the warden of the Black Manor. The behir and the ooze mephit (see Area 11) do as she commands.

Tactics

If threatened, Zsavri attempts to get out of the building. Once outside, she is joined by her animal companion, Krau, a giant crocodile. She casts *greater magic fang* on herself and *magic fang* on Krau.

Zsavri, Yuan-Ti Abomination Drd6: CR 13; Large monstrous humanoid; HD 9d8+36 + 6d8+24; hp 154; Init +7; Speed 30 feet, climb 20 feet, swim 20 feet; AC 26 (+3 Dex, –1 size, +10 natural, +2 armor, +2 shield); Attack +19/+14/+9 melee (1d8+5, large scimitar), or +19/+14/+9 ranged (1d8+5, longspear) or +16 bite (2d6+7; SA Spell-like abilities, psionics, improved grab, constrict 1d6+6; SQ SR 16; SV Fort +12, Ref +11, Will +18; AL NE; Str 21, Dex 16, Con 19, Int 17, Wis 24, Cha 14

Skills and Feats: Animal Empathy +10, Concentration +12, Craft (basket weaving) +16, Handle Animal +11, Hide +6, Intuit Motive +8, Knowledge (nature) +10, Listen +18, Move Silently +4, Profession (sailor) +14, Spellcraft +11, Spot +18, Tumble +6, Wilderness Lore +16; Alertness, Blind-Fight, Brew Potion, Dodge, Expertise, Improved Initiative, Scribe Scroll, Spell Penetration

Possessions: Masterwork large scimitar, three masterwork longspears, masterwork leather armor, masterwork large wooden shield, *+4 periapt of wisdom, bone Quaan ring, potion of see invisibility,* scrolls of *protection from elements* and *cure moderate wounds*

Spells (5/5/5/4): 0—*cure minor wounds* (2), *flare, read magic, resistance*; 1st—*cure light wounds* (2), *entangle, magic fang, obscuring mist*; 2nd—*barkskin, flame blade, heat metal, resist elements, summon swarm*; 3rd—*contagion, cure moderate wounds, greater magic fang, meld into stone*

Psionics (Sp): All yuan-ti can produce these effects at will:

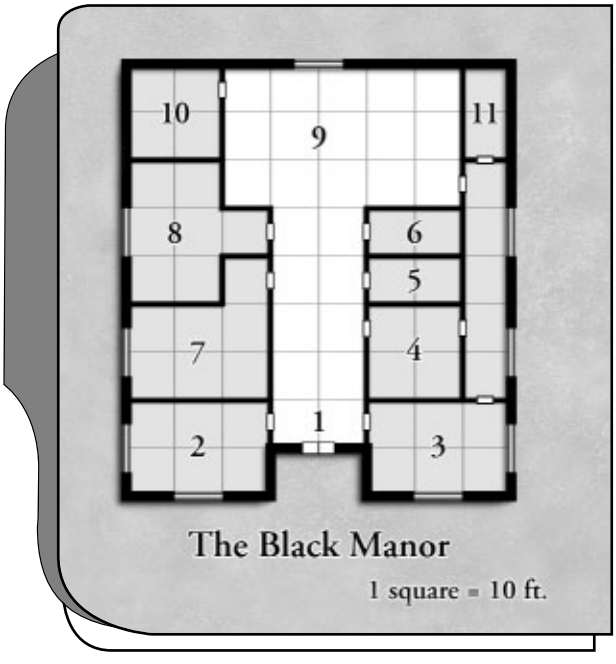
Detect Poison: As the spell cast by a 6th-level sorcerer.

Alternate Form: The yuan-ti can assume the form of a Tiny to Large viper (see the Snake entry in the MM Appendix 1: Animals). This ability is similar to a *shapechange* spell cast by a 19th-level sorcerer but allows only viper forms. If the yuan-ti has a poisonous bite of its own, it uses its own or the viper's poison, whichever is more potent.

Chameleon Power: The yuan-ti can change the coloration of itself and its equipment to match its surroundings.

Produce Acid: The yuan-ti can exude acid from its body, dealing 1d6 points of damage to anything it touches. The acid becomes inert when it leaves the yuan-ti's body.

Aversion: The yuan-ti creates a compulsion effect targeting one creature within 30 feet. The subject must succeed at a Will save (DC 17) or gain an aversion to snakes for 10 minutes. Affected subjects must stay at least 20 feet from any snake or yuan-ti, alive or dead; if already within 20 feet, they move away. A subject can overcome the compulsion by succeeding at another Will save (DC 17), but the character still suffers deep anxiety. This feeling causes a –4 reduction to Dexterity until the effect wears off or the subject is no longer within 20 feet of a snake or yuan-ti. This ability is otherwise similar to *antipathy* as cast by a 16th-level sorcerer.



Poison (Ex): Bite, Fortitude save (DC 17); initial and secondary damage 1d6 temporary points of Constitution damage.

Improved Grab (Ex): To use this ability, a snake-headed abomination must hit with its bite attack. If it gets a hold, it can constrict.

Constrict (Ex): An abomination deals 1d6+6 points of damage with a successful grapple check against Large or smaller creatures.

Krau, Giant Crocodile Animal Companion: 60 hp, AC 16, +11 bite (2d8+12) or +11 tail slap (1d12+12), improved grab; see MM, page 195

9. Pactlord Meeting Hall

This large room occupies most of one end of the manor. A deep, brick-red carpet lines the floor. Upon it sits a massive marble-topped table and a number of chairs, many of which do not seem meant for a human to sit upon—a number of them look more like large cushions. Fat, round candles and a few hefty mugs rest upon the table, amid a jumble of papers. All the furnishings seem generally scaled for large creatures.

This is the meeting room for the Pactlords of the Quaan. The papers on the table detail the group's plans, including the composition of both Grailquest Teams. If the PCs spend at least half an hour going over the many, many papers here and succeed at a Search check (DC 17), they find not only numerous references to themselves, but an outline of the plan Li the phasm and Saarachk the aranea (see Area 10) want to use to ambush them (as described in Chapter Eight).

They certainly learn that the Pactlords seek the *Black Grail,* using another magic item with a *wish* spell so they may more easily obtain the *grail.* No further explanation is apparent.

Development

There is a good chance that Verd the ooze mephit is here (see Area 11), although if Zsavri fled, Verd probably will have, too.

10. Saarachk's chamber

Thick webs fill this room. At the center, the webs come together to make a hammocklike bed.

Saarachk, an aranea, lives here when not on a mission. Although a sorcerer, he normally is sent on tasks of infiltration and assassination. See "The Pactlords Arrive" event in Chapter Ten for more information.

Treasure

Hidden within the webs is a tightly woven web-sack (Search, DC 24 to find). Inside are 452 gp, three 250 gp opals, a *potion of displacement*, and a *+1 dagger of returning*.

11. Verd's Chamber

The stench here is enough to make almost anyone recoil. A few open and empty crates suggest that this might have once been a storeroom, but now a thick, festering, glistening ooze coats the chamber. Insects buzz in the air and crawl along the surface of the muck.

This is where Verd, the Black Manor's errand-boy and general lackey, lives when not performing menial tasks.

Verd, Ooze Mephit: hp 15, AC 16, +6 claws (1d3+3, two attacks), breath weapon (damage 1d4 plus –4 to AC and –2 to attacks, DC 12), spell-like abilities (1x/hour *Melf's acid arrow*, 1x/day *stinking cloud*), summon ooze mephit (25% chance), fast healing 2, DR 5/+1; see MM, page 132

Treasure

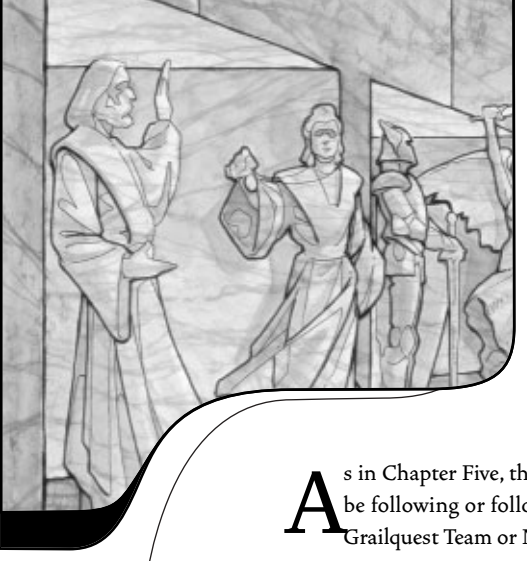
Ironically, it's in this room, buried in the muck, that the PCs will find one third of the *staff of shards* (Search, DC 18). This piece is not sentient like Yaeshla (see Chapter Six, chapel Area 18). It resembles a wooden rod with an iron tip on each end. While in this form it has no magical powers or aura, but when connected to Yaeshla (they simply snap together) it can be used as a *rod of potion touch*,* in addition to a long-hafted *+1 dagger*. Verd has no idea of its value.

* See *The Book of Eldritch Might*.

Going Beyond the Map

The Quaan is a vast place, although not an infinite one. The plane is basically a round disk, with the edges marked by walls of magical force, impenetrable by any nondivine force. The DM should feel free to add further Pactlord dwellings, the ruined home of the plane's original creator, or unique encounter areas as desired.

Further, assume that the Pactlords, being a large organization, have other bases of operation on the material plane with even more monstrous agents.



The Inner Vaults

This chapter details a section of the Banewarrens known as the Inner Vaults. This region becomes accessible when whoever possesses the Banewarrens key opens the Sealed Door in Area 44 of the Outer Vaults (see Chapter Five). The key might be in the hands of the PCs, the Pactlords of the Quaan, or Navanna Vladaam.

As in Chapter Five, the player characters might indeed be following or followed by other groups—the Grailquest Team or Navanna and her agents—into the Banewarrens. However, in this chapter, characters from both the Church of Lothian and the Inverted Pyramid also enter the warrens.

Event 1: Complications

At a point determined by the DM, the PCs are *scried* by members of the Inverted Pyramid. Some of the characters may have the ability to sense this happening (see the *scry* spell description). At the same time, Jevicca Norr casts a *sending* spell and gives them the following message: "We at the Inverted Pyramid are pulling for you and want to help. We would like to *teleport* a comrade of ours to aid you. He brings extremely vital new information with him." The PCs, of course, can reply however they wish. Unless they strongly urge Jevicca not to send their comrade, an Inverted Pyramid mage *teleports* Avach Ur-Tesstrin to their location (seen via the *scry*).

Avach Ur-Tesstrin is an extremely capable eldritch warrior†. This muscular, blond human is 6 feet tall and has a thin, angular face. When he arrives, he says the following:

"Greetings. Jevicca Norr sends her regards, and her apologies for this intrusion. While I am sure you are leery about all of this, let me truthfully tell you that I am on your side and want to help with your quest. However, I have urgent—and dire—news. There are foes already here, sent by Brother Heth Neferul to recover one of the evil artifacts. Although Brother Heth may no longer be a threat, we must still prevent his agents from obtaining the *sword of lies*. These agents, of course, like Brother Heth, claim to be working for the Church of Lothian. We've got to get to the sword before they do."

† See the *Book of Eldritch Might II: Songs and Souls of Power*.

Not everything Avach is saying is true—although he believes it is. The Inverted Pyramid has learned that the Church of Lothian wants to obtain the *sword of lies,* a bane here in the warrens. They do not know why, but they know they want to stop them, for among the sword's many powers are abilities usable to great effect against arcanists. With powerful spells, they have carefully rewritten Avach's memories and reprogrammed his thoughts. They took these steps as a precaution so he would appear completely believable and do exactly what the Inverted Pyramid needed him to do: Stop the Church agents from getting the sword.

For the purposes of *dispel magic* effects, a 17th-level wizard created the mental programming (subtle magical compulsions) in Avach. His instructions include the following:

1. Stop anyone from obtaining the *sword of lies.*
2. If it is not possible to accomplish #1, then delay anyone with the *sword of lies* until the Inverted Pyramid can try to reseal the Banewarrens (trapping the sword and those after it—and Avach—inside).
3. Forget the existence of this mental programming, forget the truth about the Church of Lothian's actual (altruistic) desire for the sword, and forget the fact that the Inverted Pyramid fears the sword.

If Sister Mara contacted the PCs in Chapter Six, they already know the Church seeks the *sword of lies*. If they tell Avach this information, he contends that Sister Mara must have been duped, and that they must stop the Church's agents. However, at this point, the characters themselves might be Church agents! If *that* is the case, Avach is really thrown for a loop—the Inverted Pyramid did not foresee that turn of events. In this situation, he counsels the PCs to come with him back to the city so that someone else from his organization can advise them what to do. (If they agree, they can get in contact with Jevicca through the Ghostly Minstrel, and she will try to talk them out of going after the sword.)

Otherwise, Avach will go with the player characters to help them within the Banewarrens, assuming they agree to help stop "Brother Heth's agents" and let him come along. If they absolutely refuse, he goes off on his own to find the "faux" agents of the Church.

Avach Ur-Tesstrin, male human Ftr5/Eldritch Warrior4: CR 9; Medium humanoid; HD 5d10+10 + 4d8+8; hp 67; Init +6; Speed 20 feet; AC 19 (+2 Dex, +1 natural, +6 armor); Attack +14/+9 melee (1d10+8+1d6, bastard sword), or

+12/+7 ranged (1d8+3, longbow); SQ *Detect magic* at will, +1 natural armor; SV Fort +10, Ref +6, Will +7; AL CG; Str 16, Dex 15, Con 14, Int 13, Wis 14, Cha 12

Skills and Feats: Alchemy +5, Climb +6, Knowledge (arcana) +8, Listen +4, Spellcraft +7, Spot +4, Swim +8; Combat Reflexes, Dodge, Exotic Weapon Proficiency (bastard sword), Improved Critical (bastard sword), Improved Initiative, Lightning Reflexes, Magical Talent, Weapon Focus (bastard sword), Weapon Specialization (bastard sword)

Possessions: *+1 shock bastard sword, +1 breastplate*, masterwork mighty composite longbow (+3), 20 arrows, *periapt of health, potions of cure serious wounds, fly, heroism,* and *water breathing*, dagger, six torches, flask of acid, five tindertwigs, thunderstone, 281 gp

Event 2: The Inverted Pyramid's Next Move

Meanwhile, up in the city, the Inverted Pyramid is working to reseal the Banewarrens completely using a complex ritual and a number of spells. Jevicca Norr argues against sealing the PCs and Avach inside. However, she eventually concedes, regretfully, that it is probably for the greater good if most of the creatures who know so much about that place are sealed inside it forever, along with the key and all the banes.

Working Avach In

Avach is meant to be an NPC who accompanies the PCs for part of this adventure. He not only shares strange secrets with the player characters, but if he enters Area 45, they will learn still more intriguing knowledge. Because Avach does not actually know the truth, you could use him as a PC if you need to work in a new player or replace an existing player's lost character.

When the resealing attempt takes place, the PCs become at least somewhat aware of it. First, they have a chance to sense that they are being *scried*. Second, all the doors in the Banewarrens that can close slam shut. No door can be opened for 2d6 minutes (but they can be broken down). During this time, characters can make Knowledge (arcana) checks (DC 20) to determine that they are in the middle of the effect of a magical ritual. A subsequent Spellcraft check (DC 24) can identify that it is powerful sealing magic, coming from outside the Banewarrens and affecting the whole place. If they use *detect magic* during this time, the entire Banewarrens shows a magical aura of extremely powerful transmutation magic.

In the end, the long and the short of it is: It doesn't work. The members of the Inverted Pyramid do not have the ability to reseal the Banewarrens—only the *sealing rod* can seal the doors through the power of the *warding generators*. The spell fades, the doors all open again, and everything goes back to normal.

If the PCs return to the city and use Gather Information, a result of at least DC 25 rewards them with the knowledge that the Inverted Pyramid recently undertook some major magical enterprise. Should they contact Jevicca (or any other member), she denies the whole thing.

Event 3: The Church's Delvers (EL 9)

As described in Chapter Five, the Church of Lothian seeks the *sword of lies,* for a prophecy states that it will reveal its real form as the *sword of truth* and prove vital to the survival of the Church. Sister Mara von Witten herself dispatches a team of delvers to explore the Banewarrens and find and recover the sword.

Unless the PCs decided to accept the mission themselves, the delvers are led by a human paladin named Sharah Nestor. She is a no-nonsense, careful leader, not given to foolhardy actions or needless heroics. She keeps her red hair short and wears a blue-and-white tabard over her armor.

Her team includes three other adventurers of the faith. Vaesillian Moonheart, an elf paladin/sorcerer, is everything Sharah is not. He seeks glory, heroics, and the triumphant defeat of evil in the name of Lothian. He has long black hair and a tattoo of an ankh on his cheek. Moston Ferelurth, a young, brown-haired human cleric, feels a little in over his head but will steel himself and support his allies. Helgert Hume is a towering human woman more massive than most men. She is no paladin but a devout Lothianite nonetheless, hanging on the others' every word.

If Kalerecent is still alive, or has been *raised*, he may be with these delvers, at the DM's discretion.

Sharah Nestor, female human Pal7: CR 7; Medium humanoid; HD 7d10+14; hp 57; Init –1; Speed 20 feet; AC 21 (–1 Dex, +9 armor, +3 shield); Attack +10/+5 melee (1d8+3, battleaxe); SA *Detect evil*, lay on hands, smite evil; SQ Aura of courage; SV Fort +10, Ref +4, Will +8; AL LG; Str 15, Dex 8, Con 14, Int 8, Wis 13, Cha 17

Skills and Feats: Handle Animal +10, Heal +10, Ride +3; Combat Reflexes, Endurance, Iron Will, Quick Draw

Possessions: *+1 full plate armor, +1 battleaxe, +1 large steel shield, potions of cure light wounds* and *lesser restoration*, three vials of holy water, two daggers, 50 feet of rope, 10 gp

Spells (2): 1st—*bless, cure light wounds*

Vaesillian Moonheart, male elf Pal4/Sor2: CR 6; Medium humanoid; HD 4d10–4 + 2d4–2; hp 23; Init +0; Speed 30 feet; AC 14 (+4 armor); Attack +8 melee (2d4+3, falchion); SA *Detect evil*, lay on hands, smite evil; SQ Aura of courage; SV Fort +5, Ref +3, Will +9; AL LG; Str 15, Dex 11, Con 9, Int 12, Wis 17, Cha 15

Skills and Feats: Concentration +3, Diplomacy +9, Heal +8, Listen +5, Search +3, Spellcraft +5, Spot +7; Blind-Fight, Scribe Scroll, Spell Focus (evocation)

Possessions: *+1 spellcasting studded leather†, wand of magic missile* (21 charges), masterwork falchion, longspear, lantern, 15 gp

Paladin Spells (1): 1st—*bless weapon*

Sorcerer Spells Known (6/5): 0—*detect magic, ghost sound, light, mage hand, read magic*; 1st—*burning hands, endure elements*

† See the *Book of Eldritch Might II: Songs and Souls of Power*.

Moston Ferelurth, male human Clr4: CR 4; Medium humanoid; HD 4d8+4; hp 27; Init +2; Speed 20 feet; AC 20 (+2 Dex, +5 armor, +3 shield); Attack +6 melee (1d8+2, heavy mace), or +5 ranged (1d8, light crossbow); SV Fort +5, Ref +5, Will +8; AL NG; Str 14, Dex 14, Con 13, Int 12, Wis 19, Cha 14

Skills and Feats: Diplomacy +3, Heal +11, Knowledge (arcana) +6, Knowledge (religion) +6, Listen +6, Sense Motive +6, Spot +6; Lightning Reflexes, Toughness, Weapon Focus (heavy mace)

Possessions: *+1 large wooden shield*, masterwork chainmail, masterwork heavy mace, *pearl of power* (1st level), *potion of see invisibility*, light crossbow, 12 bolts, holy symbol, four vials of holy water, 74 gp, 87 sp

Domains: Good, Protection

Spells (5/4+1/3+1): 0—*detect magic, light, mending, read magic, resistance;* 1st—*bless, magic weapon, protection from evil, sanctuary, shield of faith;* 2nd—*augury, lesser restoration, remove paralysis, silence*

Helgert Hume, female human War3: CR 2; Medium humanoid; HD 3d8+9; hp 29; Init +6; Speed 20 feet; AC 19 (+2 Dex, +5 armor, +2 shield); Attack +8 melee (1d8+5 longspear), or +7 ranged (1d8+1 within 30 feet, heavy crossbow); SV Fort +6, Ref +3, Will +2; AL LN; Str 16, Dex 14, Con 17, Int 9, Wis 12, Cha 15

Skills and Feats: Climb +5, Innuendo +2, Listen +1, Spot +1, Swim +6; Improved Initiative, Point Blank Shot, Weapon Focus (longspear)

Possessions: *+1 longspear*, masterwork breastplate, large steel shield, masterwork heavy crossbow, 20 bolts, 10 gp, lantern, three tindertwigs

Staging this Encounter

Depending on whom the PCs have dealt with, these delvers might be friends or foes. Certainly they are foes of Avach Ur-Tesstrin, the Inverted Pyramid's emissary. The Lothianite delvers come in after the PCs have entered the Inner Vaults.

1. In the middle of a fight. Perhaps as the PCs fight the slaadi that live in Area 12, these delvers join the fray on their side, helping overcome the monsters. Alternatively, the PCs might find the Lothianites in the midst of fighting the lich in Area 18—almost certainly a losing fight.

2. As they wait in ambush. Sharah's team hears the PCs coming, and—not knowing who they are—waits to confront and possibly attack them in Area 15 or Area 24. This becomes particularly interesting if the ambush happens as the PCs make their way through an area a second time, assuming nothing has changed.

3. By accident. The PCs and the Church delvers simply wander into each other in a likely spot, such as Area 7 or Area 10. As with suggestion #2, this could occur in an area the player characters have already explored.

4. Opening a Vault. Since these delvers are looking for the *sword of lies/truth,* they are opening all the vaults they can find. This means more danger for everyone. The PCs might come upon opened vaults that they recall leaving untouched.

Event 4: Pactlord Attack

The Pactlords still want the *Black Grail,* but clearly they cannot obtain it while the PCs remain involved—the player characters have become too much of a thorn in their sides. Thus, they focus their attention on finding and killing them. The Pactlords send two of their deadliest members into the Inner Vaults after the PCs.

At some point of the DM's choosing, the PCs meet a human man and elf woman dressed as adventurers but looking wounded and hurt. The man has long dark hair and wears baggy clothing, carrying no weapons. The woman wears armor, has a scimitar, and carries a large, heavy-looking pack. "We are Thamas and Erieta," they say, "and we're exploring. Now we're lost—we just want to get out of this trap-filled place!"

This is actually Li, a phasm, and Saarachk, an aranea. Both have taken humanoid form to lull the PCs into a false sense of security so they can strike with surprise.

"Thamas," a.k.a. Li, phasm: hp 112; AC 17, +12 slams (1d3+1, two attacks), amorphous, alternate form, scent, telepathy, tremorsense, AL NE; see MM, page 150

Possessions: *Bone Quaan ring* (absorbed into its form)

"Erieta," a.k.a. Saarachk, male aranea, Sor9: CR 10; Medium shapechanger; HD 3d8+9 + 9d4+27; hp 72; Init +6; Speed 50 feet, climb 25 feet; AC 14 (+2 Dex, +1 natural, +1 ring); Attack +7 melee (1d6–1, bite); SA Poison, web; SQ Alternate form; SV Fort +8, Ref +7, Will +8; AL CN; Str 9, Dex 15, Con 17, Int 18, Wis 11, Cha 20

Skills and Feats: Alchemy +16, Climb +13, Concentration +17, Craft (weaving) +21, Escape Artist +11, Gather Information +7, Hide +2, Innuendo +2, Jump +5, Knowledge (arcana) +14, Listen +2, Move Silently +2, Profession (miner) +6, Spellcraft +16, Spot +2; Alertness, Combat Casting, Improved Initiative, Martial Weapon Proficiency (sap), Spell Focus (illusion), Spell Focus (enchantment), Weapon Finesse (bite)

Possessions: *Wand of mage armor* (five charges), *horn of evil, portable portal* (to the Quaan), *bone Quaan*

Portable Portal

When the item's user twists a central dial, this 3-inch metal sphere allows use of a plane shift *spell once per day, but only to a specific location on a specific plane, designated when the device was created.*

Caster Level: *13;* Prerequisites: *Craft Wondrous Item,* plane shift, *creator must create item on destination plane;* Market Price: *18,200 gp.*

ring, +1 ring of protection, scroll of *cone of cold,* platinum ring with onyx worth 300 gp

Sorcerer Spells Known (6/8/7/7/5): 0—*arcane mark, dancing lights, flare, ghost sound, light, mage hand, ray of frost, read magic*; 1st—*charm person, expeditious retreat, ray of enfeeblement, shield, silent image*; 2nd—*invisibility, mirror image, minor image, Tasha's hideous laughter*; 3rd—*displacement, hold person, suggestion*; 4th—*confusion, phantasmal killer*

Tactics

Saarachk most likely has already used two charges from his *mage armor* wand—one for Li and one for himself. Casting *shield* on himself brings Saarachk's Armor Class to 25 (and Li's to 21, or +4 for whatever form the phasm is using). The aranea also takes the time to cast *displacement.* In battle, Li takes the form of a frost giant and wades into battle. Saarachk hangs back and casts spells—probably starting with *confusion,* then moving to *phantasmal killer*.

Event 5: Old Friends

Assuming that one of the Pactlord Grailquest Teams or Navanna Vladaam is still around (either ahead of the PCs deeper in the Banewarrens or behind them), the player characters likely will encounter them somewhere in the Inner Vaults. Assume that neither NPC group finds the secret doors in Area 2 or Area 18 and that they can't get past the statues in Area 35. Area 24 would be an interesting spot for a confrontation, as would Area 16. If the PCs figure a way into Areas 36 and higher, they will take the lead; Navanna or the Pactlords might follow them, attacking from behind in such dangerous Areas as 44 to 45 or Area 51.

DMs should consider throwing a Grailquest Team at the PCs in this chapter—if one is still around—so the player characters can finish with them once and for all. The Pactlords have other agents that get involved later. If Navanna continues to maintain her stealthy ways, she may tail the PCs all the way to the end.

Event 6: Time Passes

With other groups exploring the vaults along with the player characters, things should remain fairly dynamic. PCs should encounter opened doors, sprung traps, slain or wounded guardians, and so on. More importantly, if they leave an area and return, they should find things changed. Some suggestions include:

1. Some of the wights described in Area 5 are destroyed in one of the rooms they patrol.
2. The *prismatic wall* in Area 35 is already active.
3. Objects described in the key below, such as the book in Area 16 or the *axe of previous wounds* from Area 30, are now in the possession of the Pactlords or other NPCs.
4. The doom fog in Area 29 is already released and spreading.
5. A fresh victim (perhaps one of Navanna's werewolves or one of the Church delvers) lies dead, covered with green dust, in Area 20.

Key to the Inner Vaults

The Inner Vaults, a central feature of Danar's creation in the Banewarrens, was corrupted terribly when Danar became Eslathagos Malkith. As the Dread One, he converted much of this area into a prison. Thus, some of the remaining guardians are actually evil creatures, and some of the traps and areas were redeveloped when this saint turned to darkness.

The Inner Vaults are cold. A bit of bone, a shard of a weapon, or shattered bits of stone or rotten wood commonly litter the broken, uneven floors here. These areas saw more extensive use than those in the Outer Vaults—but by evil, bestial creatures like orcs, ogres, and even demons.

1. Entry Hall

At the top of the stairs, a 10-foot-wide corridor goes to the left and right. Each end terminates in a door. Directly across from the stairs, a fresco shows two angels, each with the tips of their wings touching to form an arch. Under them, within the arch, blazes a sun symbol. The entire fresco, however, has been marred by what appear to be large handprints, whose touch burned the wall. These black, smeared prints appear very old.

The fresco serves as a clue (and a warning) that this level of the Banewarrens was controlled and occupied by Eslathagos Malkith after he stopped being Danar.

2. The Purifying Pool (EL 9)

A pool rests in the middle of this room, complete with a central fountain that once sprayed water high into the air to fall gently into the 6-foot-wide basin. It now contains only a thick greenish-gray sludge at the bottom that gives off an acrid aroma. A marble statue of a winged lion that once stood next to the pool now lies toppled on its side. The walls bear painted images of a four-winged angel, but the wings have been sloppily painted over with splashes of red.

This chamber, as well as Areas 3 to 10, originally served as a place to prepare banes for storage. Danar attempted to bless and consecrate each one as best he could before locking it away in a vault. The ceiling of this chamber hides a secret hatch (Search, DC 30). It leads up to a shaft that connects to another secret hatch in Area 38.

Creature

The sludge at the bottom of the pool is a fiendish black pudding, created when the holy, purified waters in the pool were transformed into a hellish goo given life.

Fiendish Black Pudding: hp 115, AC 3, +8 slam (2d6+4 and 2d6 acid), blindsight, ooze qualities, improved grab, constrict (2d6+4), acid, smite good (+10 damage to good once daily), split (weapons split creature into two), cold and fire resistance 15, DR 5/+2, SR 20. Despite its fiendish nature, this black pudding has an Intelligence of —. See MM, page 145.

3. Sanctification Chamber

Tattered blue and white cloths lie on the floor in a way that suggests they once covered the overturned stone tables in this room. A total of three tables lay toppled and pushed against the walls. Six brass incense burners hang from chains running down the middle of the chamber, each dangling about 7 feet off the floor. There are bronze torch sconces on the plaster-covered walls.

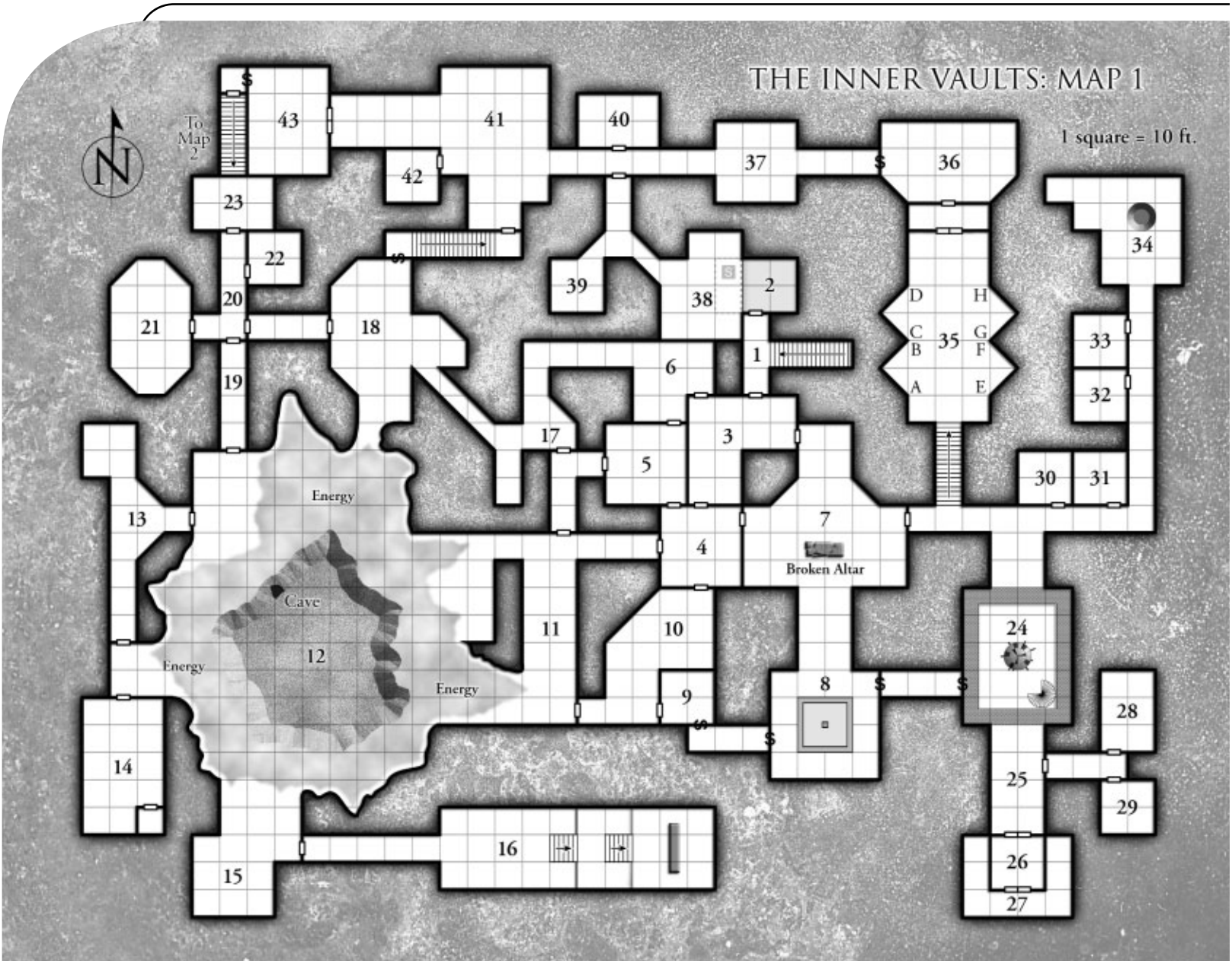
This room was once used to attempt to sanctify banes.

4. Central Locking Chamber

A grim sight greets you in this chamber. A mound of skulls rises from the center of the floor. There must be at least 50 or 60 of them, mostly human or humanoid. Almost all the white plaster has been scraped off the walls.

As long as one door in this room is open, all the other doors remain sealed shut and would have to be broken open.

There is nothing particularly interesting about the skull pile, other than the fact that it serves as a clear reminder that evil creatures inhabited this area.



5. Wight Soldiers (EL Varies)

Reminder: This is a potential area to show how "Time Passes," as described in Event 6.

This place stinks of dry, rotting flesh. A pile of refuse—the remnants of rotten wood furniture, broken weapons, shredded cloth, and more—lies in the middle of the room.

A black skull symbol has been painted on the eastern wall, 10 feet high and almost as wide.

Once a common area for those select individuals who worked alongside Danar in Areas 2 through 10, this chamber now serves as a resting spot for a frightening number of powerful wights.

Creatures

Once they were aides and helpers to Danar in the sanctification rites, but the Dread One slew these people and brought them back as wights. Thereafter, he forced them to train to become soldiers to guard this area. There are eight wights total, operating in pairs. If they hear activity, they split up into their pairs and explore Areas 1 to 10, looking for intruders; two remain here. Should someone catch them unawares, they are all here (and most likely present an overwhelming threat to the PCs).

The wights all serve the betrayed in Area 7 and do whatever it commands. If turned, they move to Area 7 to rid themselves of the effect.

Wights, Ftr4 (4): CR 7; Medium undead; HD 4d12 + 4d10; hp 48; Init +3; Speed 20 feet; AC 22 (+3 Dex, +5 armor, +4 natural); Attack +10/+5 melee (1d4+6 plus energy drain, slam) or +12/+7 melee (2d4+9, spiked chain); SA Energy drain, create spawn, SQ Undead qualities; SV Fort +5, Ref +5, Will +5; AL LE; Str 18, Dex 16, Con —, Int 11, Wis 10, Cha 8

Skills and Feats: Climb +10, Hide +11, Jump +8, Listen +7, Move Silently +18, Search +7, Spot +7, Swim +10, Tumble +5; Blind-Fight, Cleave, Exotic Weapon Proficiency (spiked chain), Power Attack, Weapon Focus (spiked chain), Weapon Specialization (spiked chain)

Possessions: Masterwork breastplate, *+1 spiked chain*

Wights, Ftr4 (4): CR 7; Medium undead; HD 4d12 + 4d10; hp 50; Init +3; Speed 20 feet; AC 22 (+3 Dex, +5 armor, +4 natural); Attack +10/+5 melee (1d4+6 slam) or +10/+5 melee (1d8+7, longsword) and +10 melee (1d6+2, hand axe); SA Energy drain, create spawn, SQ Undead qualities; SV Fort +5, Ref +4, Will +5; AL LE; Str 19, Dex 14, Con —, Int 10, Wis 11, Cha 10

Skills and Feats: Climb +10, Hide +11, Jump +8, Listen +7, Move Silently +18, Search +7, Spot +7, Swim +10, Tumble +5; Ambidexterity, Blind-Fight, Power Attack, Two-Weapon Fighting, Weapon Focus (longsword), Weapon Focus (hand axe), Weapon Specialization (longsword)

Possessions: Masterwork breastplate, *+1 longsword*, masterwork hand axe

Tactics

These wights work well together, with the chain-wielding wight in each pair using its weapon to trip foes and the other moving up to attack with sword and axe.

6. Prison Entrance

On a glass-topped table here against the north wall rests a brass tube and a small iron box. A broken wooden chair lies nearby on the floor, surrounded by shattered glass. Bronze torch sconces hang from the plaster walls.

The doors into this room can be locked and barred, but neither one is. The tube on the table bears a black skull on its cap. Inside is an extremely old parchment that reads:

I have converted the areas to the southwest to serve as my prison—I no longer need them as vaults. Take any and all brought here to the warden, Vallacor. He will know what to do with them.

It is signed with a black skull symbol. This is a message from Eslathagos Malkith himself.

The box is locked (DC 30 to open). The inside of the lid is covered with hooks, upon which hang numerous brass keys. The cells that these keys opened were destroyed by the Conflagration, however (see Area 12).

7. The Desecrated Temple

Reminder: Here the PCs may meet the Church of Lothian's delvers from Event 3.

This area, as well as Area 8, is affected by a special *unhallow* spell. There is no in-place spell effect accompanying it. However, if a turned undead enters this area, it can make a Will saving throw versus a level check from the turning cleric to shake itself of the turning effect.

White marble tiles cover the uneven floor here, while cracked plaster coats the walls. Painted frescoes showing scenes of saintly figures and angelic beings have been crudely defaced. Between them stands a painted wood screen, its artwork similarly defaced. An altar of gold with a white marble top has been sundered in two parts, which remain next to each other in the middle of the room. Two incense burners sit atop the altar, along with a crystal bowl. A dark stain on the ground around the split altar almost looks like dried blood that oozed from a bleeding wound. The smell of scorched stone lingers in the air, and a soft glow comes from the south.

The southwest corner has a long white table with silver inlay, on which sit six covered trays of ornately engraved silver. In the southeast corner, another table covered in a white silk cloth bears a number of silver cloaks and a stoppered crystal flask appropriate for holding holy water.

#9

Show the players illustration #9. Once a temple dedicated to an entire pantheon of good-aligned deities and used by Danar himself, this temple has been defiled. It is now a place of corruption and evil.

Behind the screen, an archway leads to a passageway.

Creature

The betrayed, a vampiric undead creature, spends much of its time here. Once Trese Philipin was a cleric who served Danar faithfully as the warden of this temple and the entire bane-sanctifying and -destroying section of these vaults (Areas 2 to 10). Trese was tortured to death here by his former master when the latter turned to darkness. Now he—it—haunts the area as a bitter and hateful undead creature. It commands the wights described in Area 5.

The Betrayed: hp 65; see the Banes Appendix

Tactics

If the betrayed knows there are intruders about (if it hears combat in nearby areas or other such noise), it attempts to join the wights and use its knowledge of this level's layout to outflank its foes. If the intruders' ranks obviously include a powerful cleric eager to use his or her turning ability, it attempts to bring the wights back to this room to take advantage of the *unhallow* effect. It is not at all afraid to use hit-and-run tactics, or employ its turn living power to isolate some of the intruders from the others. The betrayed is cunning and extremely hateful, eager not only to kill but to belittle its foes, particularly clerics or paladins. It revels in blasphemy, mocking the deities of any holy symbols it sees and ranting cruelly about the beliefs of good-aligned faiths—often in disturbing and distasteful ways.

Altar

The two incense burners on the broken altar each hold a block of *incense of obsession*. The crystal bowl is worth 120 gp.

The Tables

The silver trays on the southwest table are each worth 175 gp. They each contain 10 holy wafers that still appear fresh. However, they taste like human blood and are actually poisonous if eaten (1d6/2d6 points of temporary Constitution damage, Fortitude save, DC 20). These poisons lose their potency 24 hours after they are removed from this temple.

The cloaks on the other table—there are six in all—were once sacred, but are now *cloaks of poisonousness.* However, they lose all potency if taken from this room, becoming simply garments worth 25 gp each. The crystal holy water container has become a *flask of curses*.

8. The Desecrated Reliquary

The hallway from the north is defended by a powerful three-part magic trap. The northernmost 10 feet of the hall inflicts 5d6 points of electrical damage per round to anything in the area. The whole area crackles with a greenish hue when this trap discharges its effect.

Electrical Trap: CR 3; 5d6 points of electrical damage, Reflex save (DC 20) halves; Search (DC 28), Disable Device (DC 28)

The central 10 feet of the hall stuns anyone passing through it for 1d4 rounds. The whole area crackles with a dark bluish flash when this trap discharges its effect.

Stunning Trap: CR 4; stuns for 1d4 rounds, Fortitude save (DC 20) negates; Search (DC 29); Disable Device (DC 29)

The southernmost 10 feet of the corridor holds a magical field that teleports anyone who steps here into the northernmost 10 feet, where they suffer electrical damage immediately with no save possible. The whole area glows with an orange light when this trap discharges its effect.

Teleport Trap: CR 5; teleport, Fortitude save (DC 20) negates; Search (DC 30); Disable Device (DC 30)

This area is affected by an *unhallow* spell.

This large room is very dimly lit by candles arrayed on shelves built into the walls. A central dais rises a foot off the ground, and in the center of it lies a box of gold and white stone. The box measures about 18 inches long and 10 inches wide and tall. A black silk cloth lies on the dais next to the box. The room feels cold, smells of musk, and echoes with the sound of low, evil chants.

This is the heart of the betrayed's power. This chamber is its home—where it returns when reduced to 0 hit points. The box was once a holy reliquary, but only those that Search it closely (DC 18) note that someone has broken off the various holy symbols that once adorned it. They lie underneath the silk cloth. The box now serves as the betrayed's secret lair, where it sleeps amid broken holy relics in gaseous form. To destroy the creature forever, first destroying the box (hardness 8, 40 hit points) while the betrayed is within at 0 hit points (see "Development").

Most of the candles in this room are magical—the equivalent of *everburning torches,* except that they give off only the light of a candle flame (13 candles in all, worth 20 gp each). Mixed in with the rest, three of the candles burning on the shelves are *candles of desecration*. See the Banes Appendix for more information.

The chanting, merely a minor magical sound, has no real effect on anything.

Secret Doors

The secret door to the west (Search, DC 25 to find) is hidden within the shelves; an unlit candle operates the mechanism that lowers the wall section into the ground. The secret door to the east (Search, DC 27 to find) pivots when pushed. Characters within either secret passage can clearly see the secret doors on either end.

Development

If the betrayed comes here, it avoids the traps by sifting through cracks in the walls in gaseous form to get from Area 7 to 8, or through the cracks around the secret doors from Areas 9 or 24. In this room it prepares its final stand, if it must. Only by destroying the defiled reliquary, snuffing the *candles of desecration,* and casting a *hallow* spell in the room can the characters put the betrayed to its final rest. Otherwise, it comes back in 1d4 days.

9. Monitor Booth

This 20-foot-square room has a single door, leading to the west. The walls are reinforced stone, except that an iron plate entirely covers the north wall. An iron crank juts from the east wall, while a large lever is set into the floor by the north wall.

The crank on the eastern wall lowers the metal plate covering the north wall, exposing a transparent steel window 5 feet square and half an inch thick. The iron lever near the north wall activates the bane destroyer in Area 10 (see below).

A rogue making a successful Disable Device check (DC 25) can disable this mechanism. On such a success, the character also can tell that this device has been disabled before, but someone reactivated it long, long ago.

10. The Bane Destroyer

Reminder: Here the PCs may encounter the Church of Lothian's delvers as described in Event 3.

This irregular room is devoid of furnishings. The walls are blackened, as if by fire. On the floor, centermost in the room, lies a 15-foot-square metal plate. Above it, on the ceiling, is another metal plate.

The metal plate in the ceiling is no such thing. Instead, it is the bottom of a 50-ton block of iron. After the activation of the large lever in the adjoining room (Area 9), if any weight more than 5 lbs. is placed on the plate, the iron block on the ceiling comes down with amazing force and speed, inflicting 15d6 points of damage upon anyone or anything in the way (Reflex saving throw [DC 25] avoids). After the blow, the block retracts back up to the ceiling via a pair of iron supports.

Despite what it might appear to adventurers, this is not a trap—or at least, it was not originally intended to be one. Danar designed this chamber to crush, and hopefully destroy, evil artifacts. At first, he stored only what he could not destroy. When he realized how much evil energy was released back into the world with each item's destruction (hence the blackened walls), he stopped using the device.

11. Wide Hall

This hallway is lined with painted frescoes on either side. Though mostly white, they show a formal procession of people in golden robes carrying jeweled boxes. The southern end of the western wall is strangely marred, as if melted.

Nothing remarkable awaits the PCs here. The hall was damaged by the Conflagration (Area 12).

12. The Conflagration (EL 10)

Reminder: Here the PCs may meet the Church of Lothian's delvers from Event 3.

Ahead, you see an odd shimmer in the air. A flash erupts before your eyes. A bolt of energy plays along the ceiling in the distance. The smell of scorched air greets your nostrils. Your hair stands on end as energy tingles against your skin.

An energy effect occupies this vast chamber and lights it with a dim, flickering glow. In the center is a vast smoldering pit. Most of the walls look as though they have been scorched and even melted, almost as if the energy here carved the cavern. But glimpses of worked masonry stone here and there—a patch of a wall, a bit of the floor—demonstrate that it was not always like this.

This energy-carved cavern must be 140 feet in diameter. The pit is nearly 70 feet across. Suddenly, a clawed hand rises up over the side of the pit. Things—hulking, toadlike, humanoid things—pull themselves out of the pit and stare with alien eyes, their teeth and claws glistening in the magical, pulsing light.

#8

Show the players illustration #8. Long ago, a half-fiend wizard named Sokalahn attempted to break into the Banewarrens to get at the magic within. He used extremely powerful spells to pierce Danar's wards—and failed. The resulting magical backlash, however, created a region of unstable and extremely dangerous energy. The veil of reality is worn very thin throughout this unstable area.

Characters can examine the strange area from afar. A successful Knowledge (arcana) check (DC 15) suggests that

this is some sort of magical incident gone horribly awry and probably presents at least some mild physical danger. The same check with a DC of 20 suggests that the effect will harm spellcasting and existing effects. A character succeeding at a Knowledge (arcana) check (DC 25) knows that the fabric of reality is frayed here, and that spells or spell effects brought into this area likely will tear holes to other, random, planes. Such holes probably have opened in this area already.

The Conflagration

For every round spent in the area designated "energy" on the map, a character risks a 30 percent chance of suffering 1d6 points of force damage (no save, but SR applies—the caster level is random: 1d20). Those blasted must further make a Fortitude saving throw (DC equals 10 plus the damage dealt) or be struck blind for 1d10+5 minutes.

The most dangerous thing about the Conflagration is the effect it has on spells and spell-like effects. Anyone who enters the Conflagration bearing an active spell effect (*bull's strength, fly*, etc.) must make a Will saving throw for each effect. The DC for the save is 15 plus the level of the spell effect. If the saving throw fails, the spell transforms into dangerous energy, inflicting 1d6 points of force damage per spell level and canceling the spell effect.

Anyone actually casting a spell or spell-like effect in the Conflagration—or casting a spell or spell-like effect with its area or target in the Conflagration—automatically opens up a momentary rift to another plane, and the spell does not function. The rift remains open only long enough to offer a brief glimpse into another random plane. It appears either where the caster is (if within the Conflagration) or where the effect or the target would be. Each time this happens, there is a 50 percent chance that it acts as a *summon monster* spell of one level higher than the spell (or spell effect) level; the magic calls some random uncontrolled creature(s) from another plane. (Casting a 9th-level spell in or into the Conflagration results in two *summon monster IX* spells.) Unless it is intelligent and good aligned, the called creature attacks whoever it thinks just stole it away from its home. Creatures both intelligent and good aligned shift back to their home plane if possible, annoyed. All called creatures are considered hostile.

Lastly, lately there has been a 10 percent chance each year of a rift opening on its own (despite the wards), carrying with it a random outsider, and dumping it here. The xorn in Area 21 got here that way. So did the slaadi that live in the pit described below. Until the Sealed Door opened, called creatures could not leave. When the door did open and the wards on the Inner Vaults weakened, the chance of randomly calling an outsider into the Conflagration rose dramatically to its current percentage.

The Pit

The pit in the center of the cavern has been carved from the stone by the magical energy at work here, slowly consuming and liquefying everything. It measures 60 feet deep, the final 10 feet being a superheated liquid morass of disrupted matter like a cross between magma and boiling oil. Anyone within the morass suffers 10d6 points of heat damage each round.

Creatures

The blue slaad arrived first. When the red arrived years later, the blue immediately subjugated it. Now both live in a cave within the pit. Until today, the slaadi have eaten extremely little, for not much lives in the Banewarrens. Occasionally, when the Conflagration calls another creature, they attack in concert and devour it (one xorn got away—see Area 21). Still, they have spent most of their time in hibernation. When the Sealed Door into the Inner Vaults opened, it sent a ripple through the Conflagration that woke them. They are eager to learn what is going on.

Because of their resistances and fast healing, the slaadi don't really fear the morass at the bottom of the pit; it's not likely to kill them. Most likely they don't realize they can now summon other slaadi, because for so long, while the Inner Vaults were sealed, they couldn't. Thus they won't try unless truly desperate.

Red Slaad: hp 48, AC 16, +10 bite (2d8+4) and +8 claws (1d4+2 plus implant, two attacks), pounce, stunning croak, summon slaad; see MM, page 167

Blue Slaad: hp 60, AC 18, +11 rakes (2d6+4, four attacks) and +9 bite (2d8+2 plus disease), spell-like abilities, summon slaad; see MM, page 167

The Slaadi Cave

About 10 feet above the level of the liquid morass, at the spot marked on the map, there lies a small cave about 12 feet high, 15 feet wide, and 20 feet deep. Hidden within the cave, the slaadi have gathered some small treasure from exploring the Inner Vaults. A scrap of very old fur or a bit of bone betrays their rare meals. Their treasure consists of: six gems (120 gp, 200 gp, 200 gp, 350 gp, 500 gp, and 900 gp), a silver ewer worth 200 gp, and a small golden statue (about a foot tall) of an angel, worth 1250 gp.

13. Cut-Off Room

This triangle-shaped chamber bears a bas relief on the western wall. It shows a man in long white robes with a book under one arm and a dragon-headed scepter or rod in his other hand. He touches a rune- and sigil-covered door with the rod. Above his head, angels with arrows nocked into bows watch over him protectively. A particularly large symbol appears prominently on the door.

Anyone examining the door with the Knowledge (arcana) or Decipher Script skill (DC 20) knows that the prominent symbol on the door means "sealed." The image is a subtle clue toward the existence of the *sealing rod* and its ability to seal the Banewarrens. The man in the relief is Danar.

The 20 foot-square area to the north is empty except for some old human bones.

14. Converted Prison (EL 11)

The rectangular chamber offers a strangely self-contradictory scene. Someone has painted a pastoral image on the white plaster walls. Winged horses soar over green hills and lush forests. In the distance, painted on the eastern wall, is a tall, majestic white fortress. Pounded through the now cracked and faded plaster, however, are huge iron spikes with manacles and chains attached. Skeletons dangle from these bindings—12 in all—as though people died here, imprisoned. The floor is covered in dried filth.

Eslathagos Malkith had converted much of the area destroyed in the Conflagration (see Area 12) into a prison. This is one of the few converted prison chambers left intact. These poor souls were all victims of his malicious nature. However, because of the ambient evil energies and long exposure to the nearby Conflagration, they are also magically animated.

The small 10-foot-square room in the southeast corner contains a skeletal warrior (see below). A number of rusted, worthless, nonmagical weapons and torture implements hang on the walls, and an unlit iron brazier sits on the floor.

Creatures

As soon as anyone enters this room, the door to the small southeastern chamber flies open. A heavily armored skeletal figure comes out sporting a huge helm with gigantic horns. It wields a greatsword. Immediately thereafter, all 12 other skeletons rise up, still chained to the wall. The chained skeletons attack by spitting out their teeth in ranged attacks. Despite being chained, don't treat them as helpless. The skeletal warrior, once the head of the guards in this area, moves in to attack. They fight to the death.

Teeth-Spitting Skeletons (12): CR 2; Medium undead; HD 4d12; hp 26 each; Init +4; Speed 0 feet; AC 15 (+4 Dex, +1 natural); Attack +6 ranged (1d6, teeth); SQ Turn resistance +2, undead qualities, immune to cold, half damage from piercing or slashing weapons; SV Fort +1, Ref +5, Will +2; AL CE; Str 10, Dex 18, Con —, Int —, Wis 6, Cha 4

Skeletal Warrior, Ftr8: CR 9; Medium undead; HD 8d12; hp 68; Init +6; Speed 20 feet; AC 21 (+1 Dex, +9 armor, +1 helm); Attack +13/+8 melee (2d6+7+1d6 sonic, greatsword); SQ Turn resistance +2, undead qualities, immune to cold, half damage from piercing or slashing weapons; SV Fort +6, Ref +6, Will +2; AL N; Str 16, Dex 14, Con —, Int 12, Wis 11, Cha 9

Skills and Feats: Balance +7, Climb +9, Jump +9, Listen +2, Sense Motive +4, Spot +2, Use Rope +6; Alertness, Cleave, Improved Critical (greatsword), Improved Initiative, Lightning Reflexes, Power Attack, Toughness, Weapon Focus (greatsword), Weapon Specialization (greatsword)

Possessions: *+1 full plate armor, +1 sonic greatsword, +1 helm of alacrity*†, key to the secret door in Area 18

† See the *Book of Eldritch Might II: Songs and Souls of Power.*

15. Exposed Vault

Reminder: Here the PCs may meet the Church of Lothian's delvers from Event 3.

South out of the rougher, blasted area, you find a chamber with a number of metal, gear-driven devices on the eastern and western walls. Two skeletons lie on the ground in the southern portion of the room.

The Conflagration (see Area 12) destroyed the door and the whole north wall of this vault. Anyone with Knowledge (engineering) or Disable Device skill ranks who examines the machines closely can tell they were once part of an elaborate mechanical trap. Now they are wrecked and useless.

The skeletons were orcs; their comrades have long since looted them of anything valuable. Servants of the Dread One, they were looting the vaults for valuables themselves when they fell victim to the trap in this room.

16. Sword Vault

Reminder: In this area, the PCs potentially can meet some "Old Friends" as described in Event 5 and/or become aware of how "Time Passes," as described in Event 6.

This long, narrow room rises up to not one but two levels higher toward the east. These raised levels can be reached by 10-foot-wide staircases that run through the center of the room. Each staircase is flanked by iron railings forged with a sword motif, the point of each blade pointed down. The walls of the room from floor to ceiling bear carved images of swords likewise pointing down. Iron sconces holding unlit candles jut out from each pommel.

The top level of this chamber appears to feature a long altar made of stone and also carved with a sword motif.

This vault once held a number of evil swords. They were all taken by servants of the Dread One. The altarlike display stone for the swords no longer holds any blades, but its surface obviously bears five ceremonially designed places to lay them. Behind the stone, an ancient skeleton clothed in rotten scraps of cloth and leather lies on the ground. A rusty

short sword lies nearby, as well as a pile of dust that was a pack. Within the dust, a character can find an old book that has weathered the passage of time fairly well. It is full of what appears to be nonsense (or at least terribly obscure) prose pieces about Danar, his wife Parnaith, and other related characters. One passage is circled. It reads:

And thus Danar said to the knight, Gerant, "Go forth and find the guardian seraph who holds the sword of flame." To do so, Gerant had to travel through strange lands where he met the Lillend. She sang a beautiful song and introduced her companion, Thrune, the peaceful one. But the song delayed him, and Regarax the half-dragon attacked Parnaith as she collected her lovely jewels. It was Bastion, the four-winged angel of the morning, who saved them all in the end.

Someone, in a much cruder hand, has scrawled the name "Malificite" in the margin and drawn a line to the words "four-winged angel." This refers to the angel's corruption to evil, as described more fully in Chapter Ten. The passage, however, is the clue needed to get past the statues in Area 35.

If someone activates each statue in the same order as each image is mentioned in this passage, characters can make their way through.

17. Trap Room (EL 6)

To the north of what appears to be either a deep, empty alcove or a short, dead-end hall lies a small, triangular room. The plaster-covered walls hold bronze torch sconces.

The player characters will find two traps in this room: One serves as a lure for the other. Inhabitants of the Banewarrens, past and present, avoid(ed) this room altogether.

Bind Item Trap

The first trap was developed to keep bane thieves from getting away with their stolen loot. Anyone entering the triangle-shaped part of the room holding a magic item in one or both hands must make a Reflex saving throw (DC 16). Failure indicates that the item is torn from their grasp and encased in a *globe of force*, as described in the *bind item** spell. The *globe* is impervious, like a *wall of force.* It moves at a rate of 20 feet per round, away from this area and into the 10-foot-wide, 20-foot-long southern section of the room.

Characters who follow the *globe(s)*—or just explore that area on their own—probably fall victim to the second trap. *Globes* hover with their stolen items until the trap is sprung or until 1 round passes, then are teleported to Jabel Shammar into a storing facility impervious to all divinations. These items should be considered gone forever.

Bind Item* **Trap:** CR 4; item lost forever; Reflex save (DC 16) avoids; Search (DC 29); Disable Device (DC 29)

* See *The Book of Eldritch Might*.

Slamming Rock Trap

Anyone entering the room's 20-foot southern section triggers a trap. The southern wall slams northward into the wall 30 feet from it. The trap resets immediately.

Slamming Rock Trap: CR 5; 10d6 points of damage; Reflex save (DC 20) avoids; Search (DC 22); Disable Device (DC 30)

18. Prison Core (EL 9)

Reminder: Here the PCs may encounter the Church of Lothian's delvers as described in Event 3.

Ancient, rotted, and rusted, the torture devices that fill this room clearly have not seen use in decades—probably much longer. Here sit multiple racks, an oven for heating irons, cages just large enough to squeeze a human into, and worse. A "nook" area to the east has a bed, a chest, and a few other furnishings, but all have rotted and collapsed now. Weapons and implements of torture hang from every wall on ancient hooks.

In the vaults' latter days, this chamber served as the central core of the prison complex. Vallacor, the prison warden, lived here right among his torture victims. He was a terrible, horrible man, and remains just as terrible now that he is undead.

Creatures

Long ago, Vallacor was an important lieutenant of Eslathagos Malkith. A sorcerer, he was in charge of the Dread One's prisons. He eventually died here, but the energies of the place brought him back as a lichlike undead spellcaster. Vallacor enjoys all the powers of a lich, but he has no phylactery. When he is destroyed, he is gone for good. Vallacor is a variant sorcerer from the *Book of Eldritch Might II: Songs and Souls of Power*. This means he has 2 more skill points per level than standard sorcerers, and a slightly different spell list and number of known spells.

Vallacor, Minor Lich, Sor8: CR 9; Medium undead; HD 8d12; hp 60; Init +1; Speed 30 feet; AC 17 (+1 Dex, +5 natural, +1 ring); Attack +5 melee (1d8+5, negative energy touch, Fort save [DC 19] halves); SA Fear aura, paralyzing touch; SQ Turn resistance +4, DR 15/+1, immune to cold, electricity, polymorph, and mind-affecting attacks; SV Fort +2, Ref +3, Will +7; AL CE; Str 13, Dex 13, Con —, Int 13, Wis 12, Cha 20

Skills and Feats: Concentration +13, Hide +24, Knowledge (arcana) +12, Listen +11, Move Silently +15, Search +9, Sense

Motive +11, Spellcraft +14, Spot +10; Combat Casting, Scribe Scroll, Spell Focus (evocation), Spell Penetration

Possessions: *Wand of mirror image* (18 charges), *cloak of elvenkind, bead of force, +1 ring of protection*, scrolls of *lightning bolt*, *seek the soulless†*, and *ice bolt**

Spells Known (6/8/7/6/4): 0—*detect magic, ghost sound, light, mage hand, prestidigitation, ray of frost, read magic, resistance*; 1st—*acidic curse**, *harassing weapon†*, *mage armor, shocking grasp, true strike*; 2nd—*ice bolt**, *levitate, shield, web*; 3rd—*lightning bolt, seek the soulless†*, *vampiric touch*; 4th—*haste, stoneskin*

* See *The Book of Eldritch Might*.

† See the *Book of Eldritch Might II: Songs and Souls of Power.*

Tactics

Vallacor remains here, unliving, undying. You must note the point at which he first becomes aware of intruders; start making Listen checks for him as soon as possible. For example, he has a good chance of hearing a conversation as far away as Areas 6 or 11. If he hears someone approach, he immediately casts *haste,* then *mage armor.* The next round, he casts *shield* (for a grand total of AC 27), then *stoneskin.* Next, if it seems the intruders are near, he casts *shocking grasp,* hides near the entrance the PCs seem closest to, and waits. He renews *haste* if it seems prudent (the characters are taking longer than he thought, but are still on their way). Early in a fight, he uses his *wand of mirror image* and *bead of force*.

If hurt in battle, he casts *true strike* then *vampiric touch*, and drains someone to heal himself the next round.

Treasure

None of the devices or implements in the room have any use or value. Amid the rotten furnishings in the eastern part of the chamber, Searching characters (DC 18) can find a rusted iron pot with 347 gold pieces of a very ancient minting, a silver platter (worth 75 gp), and two crystal bottles (worth 200 gp each).

Secret Door

This door is hidden behind a weapon rack (DC 25 to find). It is locked (DC 33 to open), and has a secret keyhole. The current possessor of the key is the skeletal warrior in Area 14.

19. Malfunctioning Corridor (EL 5)

The door on the north end of this hallway is locked. It always locks when it closes (DC 28 to open).

A sharp, burning smell clings to the air. Scorch marks mar the walls of this 40-foot-long and 10-foot-wide corridor. A droning that was barely audible before grows louder quickly, and suddenly the corridor erupts in energy—a bolt of blue-white fire stretches from one side to the other, moves rapidly down the length of the hall, then disappears.

Every other round, a foot-wide bolt of energy stretching west to east runs the length of the corridor 3 feet off the ground, like a garrote of lightning looking for a throat. This rhythmic hazard results from a major malfunction of the energy transmitted from the Warding Sanctuary (Area 24) because of the Conflagration (Area 12).

However, should any conductive material weighing at least 50 lbs. enter the hall (like a PC), the bolt automatically "reforms" where the character is and blasts him or her for 10d6 points of damage. Then it runs down the corridor, striking anyone north of its origin site for 10d6 points of damage. The bolt cannot be dispelled by any magic short of an *antimagic field* or *Mordenkainen's disjunction*.

Energy Bolt: CR 5; 10d6 points of electrical damage, Reflex save (DC 20) halves; Search (DC 0); Disable Device (DC n/a)

20. Trapped Corridor (EL 6)

Reminder: This is a potential area to show the player characters how "Time Passes," as described in Event 6.

The door at the south end of this hallway is locked. It always locks when it closes (DC 28 to open).

This corridor appears particularly dusty, and you see a lot of bones on the floor.

If any creature enters this hall, 1 round later a greenish dust falls from the ceiling. Anyone inhaling this green dust must make a save versus the poison every round while in the corridor. However, even the touch of the dust proves dangerous. Anyone the dust touches must also make a saving throw or be paralyzed. Paralyzed creatures continue to inhale more and more of the dust until they fall dead. When no living creature stands within the corridor, the dust stops falling.

Green Dust Trap: CR 6; Poison (1d6 points of temporary Constitution damage, Fortitude save [DC 16] avoids), paralysis for 24 hours (Fortitude save [DC 15] avoids); Search (DC 17); Disable Device (DC 26)

21. The Corrupted Xorn (EL 8)

Shelves line the walls of this octagonal chamber. Each shelf holds a number of glass boxes, each about 6 inches to a side. At the bottom of each box is a felt lining and an indentation where something may have once rested, although nothing is there now.

Except for one. In the back of the room, a single, gleaming blue gemstone sits on the felt in one glass box.

Once filled with hundreds of evil magical gems, this room is mostly empty now. The elder xorn here ate all the other gems.

Creature

An elder xorn, accidentally brought here through the Conflagration (see Area 12), has spent much of its time in this room, eating the magical gems stored within the glass cases as though they were rations. Unfortunately for the xorn, they were all magical and evil gems—banes every last one of them.

The evil the creature ingested has corrupted it from within. If the PCs enter this room, it emerges from the stone floor below them and attacks, demanding gems or precious metals to eat. (It speaks in Terran but makes pretty obvious gestures.) The xorn seems satisfied with nothing less than 1,000 gp worth of gems, jewelry, or coins. Without such an offering, it will attack. If the player characters can communicate with it and give it what it wants, it explains its history here.

The xorn hates the slaadi in Area 12 more than anything. Until the Sealed Door was opened, it couldn't leave; the wards sealing the area kept even its burrowing power from functioning to let it escape. Now it can leave, and probably soon will.

Elder Xorn: hp 135, AC 22, +21 bite (4d8+7) and +19 claws (1d6+3, three attacks), 10-foot reach, burrow, immune to fire and cold, electricity resistance 10, half damage from slashing weapons, tremorsense, can't be flanked; AL NE; see MM, page 187

Treasure

The last remaining gem is a *gem of evil visions* (see the Banes Appendix).

22. Plundered Vault

The heavy Vault Door leading into this room barely hangs on its hinges any more. The room itself is empty.

This vault was plundered long ago.

23. Imprisoned Angel

The door into this room is a Vault Door. (See "Banewarrens Specifics" in the Introduction.)

This room, 30 feet wide and 20 feet deep, harbors a visage of supreme evil. A large iron cross was long ago hammered into the stone floor. Crucified upside down, a desiccated black corpse hangs from the cross, swathed in white rags. Skeletal wings sprout from its back. The walls all bear a black skull symbol painted crudely upon them. A tarnished, battered golden trumpet lies discarded next to the cross, stained black with ancient blood.

This vault was converted into a prison cell for an astral deva named Callin, who was crucified here by powerful magic. Appearances can be deceiving, however—Callin is not actually dead. Anyone making a Heal check (DC 20) can ascertain this. If someone takes Callin down from the cross, he instantly rejuvenates and takes his normal form: a golden-bodied human male with white-feathered wings.

He thanks his rescuers profusely, explaining that he was captured and brought here by Eslathagos Malkith. He can provide the PCs with some details about the Dread One, the fact that he turned this vault area into a prison but never took the time to actually open all of the vaults. Callin knows nothing of the Baneheart or any specifics about the warrens at all. He knows about the *sealing rod*, the *warding generators*, and that only the hand of the Dread One/Danar could open the Sealed Doors.

In gratitude, he uses all of his spell-like abilities (*aid, continual flame, cure light wounds, dispel evil, remove curse, remove disease, heal, holy aura*) to aid the PCs and empower them to go forward on their quest. He also grasps the trumpet, which returns to its beautiful, untarnished normal state, and gives it to them. The trumpet is a *horn of goodness*. After that, he leaves—he simply cannot stay, no matter how badly the PCs need him to. The duties of Heaven await.

Callin, Astral Deva: 98 hp, AC 29, +21/+16/+11 *heavy mace of disruption* (1d8+12), stun, DR 10/+1, SR 30, celestial qualities, uncanny dodge, numerous spell-like abilities; see MM, page 30

24. The Warding Sanctuary

Reminder: In this area, the PCs might meet up with some "Old Friends," as described in Event 5, or encounter the Church's delvers, as described in Event 3.

The ledge in this room abuts an iron mesh catwalk that forms the upper of this chamber's two levels. At the bottom, a huge metal device like an iron tower topped with a bronze sphere rises at least 30 feet high. The catwalk follows the wall, 25 feet above the lower level.

The cylindrical central tower has a 10-foot diameter. A number of jointed metallic extensions, like the legs of an insect, extend from the tower and connect to the ground, or simply jut out into the air at all angles. The top sphere measures about 15 feet across, representing half the structure's total height. A series of curved plates comprising its bronze skin fit together carefully. Each plate bears a single etched arcane rune; a few of them depict images of bronze dragons.

#1

Show the players illustration #1. The towerlike device is a *warding generator*—a powerful magical item Danar built to maintain the magical wards that seal the Banewarrens. A character making a successful Knowledge (arcana) check (DC 20) can

identify this structure for what it is; and a Knowledge (arcana) check with a DC of 25 ascertains the exact connection between this device and the Sealed Doors. This device obviously resembles those in Chapter Three, Area 6, and Chapter Five, Area 6. This one maintains the power of the wards protecting the Inner Vaults.

The *generator* has a total of 1,000 hit points, hardness 10, and a Break DC of 60. If anyone deals more than 100 points of damage to the *generator*, a resulting flare of magical energy inflicts 5d6 points of force damage to anyone within 50 feet of it (Reflex saving throw [DC 20] halves). If it suffers another 100 points of damage, there is another identical flare of energy, and the *generator* stops working. Should this occur, even the *sealing rod* (see Chapter Nine, Area 24) cannot reseal the Inner Vaults without someone first repairing this *generator*. The parts and tools needed for such repairs are in the first Sealed Door Area, Area 9 (see Chapter Three), along with information on the difficulty of the repairs and the time required to make them.

25. Prismatic Hall

A reflective coating covers all the surfaces in this long, 20-foot-wide north-south hallway. Moreover, the reflective material is faceted slightly, so that any light shimmers down the passage in prismatic splendor. On the eastern side of the corridor, there is a small steel door. At the southern end, matched gold and silver doors stand firmly closed.

Anyone entering this corridor must succeed at a Will save (DC 14) or be dazzled as described in the *hypnotic pattern* spell. The effect lasts 2 rounds, after which the victim must immediately make another save or remain caught in the effect.

Even characters who made a successful save must attempt another one each round they stay in the hall.

26. Gold and Silver Doors (EL 7)

The doors into this room—from both ways—are locked with an *arcane lock* spell cast by a 20th-level caster. Further, each pair is magically trapped with a *greater glyph of warding* that acts as a *harm* spell on a single target touching the door. Worse, 1 round after opening, the doors close with a Strength of 30. They relock with an *arcane lock,* and the *harm glyph* reactivates.

The gold and silver on the doors is fairly worthless plating. The doors are actually steel Vault Doors. (For details, see "Banewarrens Specifics" in the Introduction.)

Greater Glyph of Warding: CR 6; lose all hit points but 1d4, no saving throw; Search (DC 31); Disable Device (DC 31)

27. The Vault of Nightmares (EL 6)

When the doors into this room open (they're *arcane locked*, as mentioned in Area 26), three separate arrow traps each fire three arrows into the doorway. This is to finish off anyone affected by the *harm glyphs* in Area 26.

Toward the end of his gathering of banes, Danar learned of a magical way to trap nightmares magically. He sought to rid the world even of bad dreams. If he could store away all nightmares, then none could haunt the restful sleep of the just.

He kept as many as he could trap in this vault, stored in two different crystal flasks—one in each of the northern bends around the sides of the door. The flasks, each about a foot high, rest on shelves there. Each seethes with what appears to be a dark green, steaming liquid. If someone opens or breaks a flask, the nightmares escape. This has no mechanical effect, but the characters directly responsible for loosing these frightening horrors on the world suffer nightmares every night for months afterward. Through these dreams, they learn what they have done, the nighttime misery they have spread. The city nearby is particularly beset by the bad dreams, leading to an increase in insomnia, and ultimately anger and real violence.

Arrow Traps (3): CR3; three +10 ranged attacks (1d8 each); Search (DC 20); Disable Device (DC 20)

28. Empty Prison Vault

The heavy Vault Door leading into this rectangular room is closed but opens easily. The room itself looks empty, except for some gold and white chains bound to the wall opposite the door.

Eslathagos Malkith long ago freed the evil bane creature trapped in this vault.

29. Vault of the Doom Fog (EL 6)

Reminder: This area may show the PCs how "Time Passes," as described in Event 6.

The door into this room is a Vault Door. (See "Banewarrens Specifics" in the Introduction.) It is trapped with a maximized *holy smite* spell.

***Holy Smite* Trap:** CR 6; deals 40 points of damage to evil creatures and blinds them, 20 points of damage to neutral creatures; Reflex save [DC 16] halves and negates blinding; Search (DC 31); Disable Device (DC 31)

This chamber is filled with a sickly gray fog that rolls out the doorway as soon as someone opens the door. Otherwise, the room is empty.

Anyone in the fog must make a Will saving throw (DC 15) or completely lose all memories. Characters with this amnesia lose all spellcasting abilities, skill ranks, and feats. Their base attack

bonus falls to that of a 1st-level character of their class. They do not remember where they are, how they got there, or even who they are—nor do they recognize their friends. (An entire party afflicted by this malady is unlikely to escape the Banewarrens alive—not that they know the way out, anyway.) A *heal, greater restoration,* or a more potent spell like *wish* or *miracle*, restores lost memories, including prepared spells.

Even those who make their saving throws are affected by a *doom* spell for 1d10 minutes.

Worst of all, however, the fog spreads and grows, infecting and corrupting the air it touches to grow larger and larger. At the rate of 20 feet per minute, the fog spreads throughout the Banewarrens—only closed and sealed Vault Doors and Sealed Doors stop its spread. Eventually, if left unchecked, it spreads up to the surface and threatens the world. A *wish* or *miracle* spell returns it to the vault where it started.

30. Vault of the Cursed Axe

Reminder: This area may show how "Time Passes," as described in Event 6.

The door into this room is a Vault Door. (For details, see "Banewarrens Specifics" in the Introduction.)

A battleaxe hangs from the ceiling by a chain connected to a hook at the bottom of the weapon's handle. The blade looks wet with blood, as if it were just used to make a kill. A small pool of fresh blood gathers beneath it.

The axe is the *axe of previous wounds*. See the Banes Appendix for more information.

31. Plundered Vault

The pedestal in the middle of the chamber and the sturdy, enruned door suggest that this empty room was once a vault.

This vault was robbed of its bane.

32. Empty Vault

The thick, foreboding door opens easily. Three ancient corpses, little more than bones now, lie on the floor before two empty shelves set into the western wall.

An ogre and two orcs died here attempting to get at the banes this vault held. They were killed by a magical trap protecting the shelves (gone now), but other thieves who came after them were more successful.

33. Recycled Vault (EL 6)

The door into this room is a Vault Door. (See "Banewarrens Specifics" in the Introduction.) Anyone Searching the door (DC 20) can determine it has been opened and then resealed. The door is trapped with an *unholy blight* spell, maximized.

***Unholy Blight* Trap:** CR 6; inflicts 40 points of damage to good creatures and sickens them, 20 points of damage to neutral creatures; Fortitude save (DC 16) halves damage and negates sickening; Search (DC 31); Disable Device (DC 31)

This room holds an iron box, wrapped in chains and padlocked. A crudely painted black skull covers the western wall.

A character who successfully opens the box (DC 30) finds the following good items, which the Dread One wanted out of the way (they once belonged to him as Danar): a *+1 mace of disruption*, five *holy, aberration-bane crossbow bolts* made of adamantine, a special *pearl of power* (2nd level) that can recall only spells with the good descriptor, and a ring that adds a +2 sacred bonus to all saving throws versus effects with the evil descriptor (*Caster Level:* 5th, *Market Price:* 2,500 gp).

34. The Soul of Winter (EL 11)

There was once a door in the entrance to this room, but it was clearly torn off its hinges. In the doorway, someone has placed a number of aged bones in a cross pattern.

This area feels cold. The dampness on the floor and walls seems on the verge of turning to frost. A circular pit lies in the center of the room, deep and dark. All around the edges of the pit, you can see delicately traced runes, glyphs, and symbols. They glisten with the whiteness of snow.

The servants of the Dread One placed the bones here as a warning to others of their kind, after they'd opened this vault and determined the nature of the dangerous creature it held.

The pit holds the winter harridan. The runes around the pit are an imperative soul magic spell† that she wove in an attempt to free herself. Imperative soul magic spells prey upon the intelligence of others to entice characters into casting them. An arcane caster in the vicinity (10 feet) of the runes around the pit must make a Will saving throw (DC 21), or the symbols and glyphs blaze with energy and swirl up and around her, compelling her to cast the spell immediately. The caster incurs no cost to do so but simply spends a full round's action engaged in casting. The spell, once cast, breaks the magical wards that keep the harridan trapped, and she emerges from the pit on the next round.

Vaults

Remember, even if the PCs are smart enough to leave all the vaults alone, NPCs such as the Pactlords, the Church of Lothian's delvers, and even Navanna Vladaam might very well be opening them. This can loose terrible things upon the local area, or allow the evil NPCs to equip themselves with new tools of evil.

Once an arcane spellcaster makes a successful saving throw to resist the compulsion of the imperative spell, she need not attempt the saving throw again—she has become immune to the compulsion. She can still willingly choose to cast the spell, but she does so as if it were a declamatory soul magic spell.

The stats for this soul magic spell, *Astorithali*, are: Level 7 (cast at 19th level, DC 27); Int 20, Wis 23, Cha 19.

† See the *Book of Eldritch Might II: Songs and Souls of Power* for further details on soul magic.

Creature

#11

The winter harridan, angry and bitter at her long imprisonment, emerges in a destructive rage. She seeks the death of any and all creatures unfortunate enough to be nearby. See the Banes Appendix for more information. **Show the players illustration #11.**

Winter Harridan: hp 138; see the Banes Appendix

35. The Hall of Statues

Reminder: This area may show PCs how "Time Passes," as described in Event 6.

This 30-foot-wide hallway has two angular alcoves on either side of it. In front of each alcove is a pair of life-size stone statues; there are eight statues in all. These show a middle-aged human man in robes; a woman in robes holding a long, jeweled necklace; a regal knight in plate armor; an angel with a flaming sword; another angel with four wings; a humanoid dragon-man in a breastplate with an axe; a woman with feathered wings and a serpentine tail, holding a harp; and a brutish-looking ogre with a surprisingly serene expression. A staircase runs down to the south, and the north side of the hall ends in a set of double doors.

#10

Show the players illustration #10. As soon as someone enters this room from anywhere but the north entrance, a *prismatic wall* appears across the width of the hall, about 10 feet north of the statues labeled D and H on the map (see page 83). Unless deactivated via the statues or taken out as described in the spell, the *wall* remains for 24 hours after animate beings have evacuated the room.

The Statues

The statues are each labeled on the map according to this key:

A. Man in robes	E. Angel with four wings
B. Woman in robes	F. Dragon-man
C. Knight	G. Woman with wings and tail
D. Angel and flame sword	H. Ogre

Each statue rests on a hidden, recessed circular plate that pivots about 45 degrees, allowing all the statues to be moved fairly easily along a groove into one of two notches. For ease, these positions can be referred to as left and right. When the PCs enter the room, all the statues stand in the left position. Thus, each can be turned to the right. The key to deactivating the *prismatic wall* is to move each statue into the right position—*in the correct order.* The correct order is: A, C, D, G, H, F, B, E. This can be determined through a very long process of trial and error, or the clue in Area 16 might help.

When the statues are repositioned in the right order, anyone making a Listen check (DC 10) hears the sounds of doors opening, footsteps, and then a "popping" noise. What is happening is that two special constructs that look like dwarves made of stone holding bronze hammers come out of the chamber at the north end of the hall and start "popping" the colors of the *wall*. When they are done and it is gone, they return their chamber. If desired, the PCs can take their hammers, although the weapons' only power is to destroy the *prismatic wall* in this room.

The *prismatic wall* reappears if anyone enters this room other than from the north entrance.

Experience Point Award

Award the player characters experience points for getting through this area as if it were a CR 7 encounter.

36. Banedead (EL 10)

The plaster-covered walls here are peeling and chipped. Bronze torch sconces on the walls appear tarnished and empty.

The secret door (Search, DC 25) on the western wall opens when someone pulls down a torch sconce.

Creatures

Animated by the evil presence of the banes, three spectres of former servants of the Dread One haunt this chamber, attacking anything that enters.

Spectres (3): hp 48, 50, 54, AC 15, +6 incorporeal touch (1d8 + energy drain), undead qualities, incorporeal, +2 turn resistance; see MM, page 169

37. Vaulted Chamber

This room has a silver archway on the east and west ends. The vaulted ceiling, at least 35 feet high, is covered in painted frescoes of cavorting angels and metallic dragons.

There is nothing of interest here for the PCs to find.

38. Vault Guardian (EL 11)

A stone statue of a regal lion with feathered wings dominates this otherwise empty room.

The floor holds a secret hatch (not a trap door, Search check [DC 25] to find). It leads to a shaft down to another hatch and into Area 2.

Creature

The statue is a stone construct of a lammasu, built to defend the vault in Area 40. If the PCs enter this room without using the secret door in Area 36 or tampering with the door into Area 40, it appears to be a statue of a lammasu; no manner of action gets it to move.

Stone Lammasu: CR 11; Large construct; HD 7d10; hp 46; Init –2; Speed 20 feet, fly 30 feet (poor); AC 20 (–2 Dex, –1 size, +13 natural); Attack +17 melee (1d6+11, two claws); Face/Reach 5 feet x 10 feet/5 feet; SA Pounce, rake (1d6+5); SQ *Magic circle against evil*, construct immunities; SV Fort +5, Ref +5, Will +6; AL CE; Str 33, Dex 6, Con —, Int —, Wis 15, Cha 4

Breath Weapon: Cone of petrifying gas, 60 feet long, Fortitude save (DC 17) negates. Usable every 1d4 rounds.

Magic Circle Against Evil (Su): A lammasu has a continuous *magic circle against evil* that affects a 20-foot radius. The aura can be dispelled, but the lammasu can create it again as a free action on its next turn.

Spell-Like Abilities: 2x/day—*improved invisibility;* 1x/day—*dimension door*. These abilities are as the spells cast by a 7th-level sorcerer.

Pounce (Ex): If a lammasu leaps upon a foe during the first round of combat, it can make a full attack even if it has already taken a move action.

Rake (Ex): A lammasu that pounces on a creature can make two rake attacks (+17 melee) with its hind legs for 1d6+5 points of slashing damage each.

Spells (as 7th-level cleric, no components of any kind needed, 6/5+1/4+1/2+1/1+1): 0—*inflict minor wounds* (6); 1st—*bane* (2), *detect evil, divine favor, protection from chaos, shield of faith*; 2nd—*aid, bull's strength, hold person* (2), *silence*; 3rd—*magic circle against chaos, protection from elements* (2); 4th—*holy smite, inflict critical wounds*

Tactics

Opening the secret door in Area 36 first alerts the stone lammasu to possible intruders. Anyone tampering with the door to Area 40 alerts it a second time. The construct has a lammasu's spellcasting ability "programmed" in, so when it is first alerted, it "casts" the following spells on itself: *bull's strength, protection from elements* (fire), and *protection from elements* (lightning). When it gets the second alert, it casts *aid*, *shield of faith,* and *divine favor*. These spells grant it an additional +5 bonus to attacks, +4 bonus to damage, +2 bonus to Armor Class, and +4 hit points. If anyone attempts to open the door into Area 40, it uses its *improved invisibility* power and moves out to cast *silence* on the door. Then it breathes its cone of petrifying gas. Next it moves in to fight with a pounce. If reduced to 10 hit points or less, it uses *dimension door* to go back to Area 38, re-uses *improved invisibility* if needed, and waits until its breath weapon recharges to move out and use it again. In that skirmish, it attempts to keep away from foes and uses *hold person* and *holy smite* against them.

39. Empty Room

Bones and other refuse have been piled here haphazardly. The room reeks of decay.

There is nothing of interest here.

40. Vault of Curses

The door into this room is a Vault Door. (See "Banewarrens Specifics," in the Introduction.)

Upon a 3-foot-square stone block rests a huge crystalline cylinder. Within it swirl gray, violet, and dark red gases. The cylinder, nearly the width of the block, stands more than 4 feet high. Its hinged lid appears sealed with an elaborate bronze clasp.

This cylinder is a depository for a vast number of minor curses—literally thousands of them. Trapped here forever, these evil afflictions can no longer plague the world, unless someone looses them again. Anyone in the room when this cylinder is broken or opened must make a Will saving throw (DC 25) to resist an instant influx of cursed energy. Affected creatures suffer a –4 penalty to all attack rolls, saving throws, and checks of all kinds until they receive a *remove curse*.

Everyone not "native" to the Banewarrens currently in the Banewarrens when the curses are loosed must also make a similar saving throw or suffer a –2 penalty as described above.

Lastly, every single living creature within 10 miles of the Banewarrens, including all the city's inhabitants, must make the saving throw or suffer a –1 penalty as described above. This bane can have lasting repercussions on the city for years to come.

41. Dragon Dethroned (EL 14)

This can prove an extremely dangerous encounter!

The eastern entry into this arched chamber clearly once held a door in its frame, but it has long since been removed. The central portion of the floor here, about 30 feet square, appears made of smoky glass. Through its dusky, translucent surface, a dark shape of great size is visible. This mysterious shape appears to have a snaky form with a long neck, four legs, and massive wings.

Floating high above the floor, but still not quite at the 50-foot ceiling, is a massive, tarnished silver throne. This 10-foot-wide throne appears designed for a nonhuman creature of great size. Its underside, hovering 30 feet above your head, bears the etched image of a swooping dragon.

This chamber once served as the lair of a silver dragon named Saggarintys, once master guardian of the Inner Vaults. He used to cover the floor here with a layer of coins and treasure from his hoard, and he would sit upon the floating throne gazing at it. When Danar became the Dread One, however, Saggarintys tried to fight him and turn him back to good. He failed. Eslathagos Malkith transformed his hoard into this room's glasslike floor and imprisoned the dragon within it.

The Throne

Floating 30 feet off the floor, this giant throne cannot be moved. Only an *antimagic field* can make it stop floating.

Creature

Imbedded within the glass, held in stasis, is Saggarintys the Silver King. He is a powerful and vengeful dragon, interested in taking a proactive stance against evil, which is why he supported the concept of the Banewarrens. It was Saggarintys who helped Danar design the *warding generators* and the *sealing rod* to begin with, as they are based on dragon magic. He knows all about their creation process and could even repair the *generator* in the Broken Seal Area.

Unfortunately, if he is freed (through PC actions in Area 42), he awakens disoriented and angry. He attacks anyone around him, assuming them to be allies of the Dread One. Saggarintys remains utterly unaware of the centuries that have passed. Only a Diplomacy check (DC 25) can calm him on the first round, although the Difficulty Class falls by 1 point each round. After 5 rounds, he calms down and becomes more rational—even if the PCs are fighting him. He begins to realize that obviously a good deal of time has passed, and that the player characters do not look like servants of Eslathagos Malkith. (If the characters actually are evil, he does not calm down and does indeed attempt to destroy them.)

If the PCs befriend the dragon, he asks them many questions about what has happened over the years while he has been trapped. Being a dragon, he seems only moderately interested in the characters' specific goals and concerns. Saggarintys soon becomes eager to check and catalog which banes are left undisturbed and which are gone, and to assess the general status of the warrens. He accomplishes this by going to the Warding Sanctuary (Area 24) and meditating upon the *generator* there for quite a long time—too long for him to accompany the PCs. However, his presence makes that room a safe place to rest. He attacks and probably destroys any evil creatures he encounters on the way to Area 24.

Over the long term, Saggarintys can become a valuable ally, particularly when it comes to resealing the Banewarrens.

Saggarintys,Adult Silver Dragon: CR 14; Huge dragon (air); HD 22d12+110; hp 253; Init +4; Speed 40 feet, fly 150 feet (poor); AC 29 (–2 size, +21 natural); Attacks +28 melee (2d8+8, bite), +23 melee (2d6+4, two claws), +23 melee (1d8+4, two wings), +23 melee (2d6+12, tail slap); SA Breath weapon, frightful presence, spell-like abilities, sandstorm; SQ SR 22, tremorsense, blindsight, DR 5/+1, immunities, keen senses; Face/Reach 10 feet x 20 feet/10 feet; AL LG; SV Fort +18, Ref +13, Will +18; Str 27, Dex 10, Con 21, Int 20, Wis 21, Cha 20

Skills and Feats*:* Bluff +27, Concentration +27, Diplomacy +27, Escape Artist +22, Jump +30, Knowledge (arcana) +27, Knowledge (history) +27, Listen +27, Scry +27, Search +27, Sense Motive +27, Spellcraft +27, Spot +27; Cleave, Craft Wondrous Item, Flyby Attack, Improved Initiative, Power Attack, Snatch

Breath Weapon (Su): Cone of cold, 50 feet long, every 1d4 rounds; damage 12d8 points, Reflex save (DC 26) halves. This dragon can use a cone of paralyzing gas instead, paralyzing subjects who fail a Fortitude save (DC 26) for 1d6+6 rounds.

Frightful Presence (Ex): This ability takes effect automatically (radius 180 feet) whenever the dragon attacks, charges, or flies overhead. A potentially affected creature (one with less than 22 Hit Dice) that succeeds at a Will save (DC 26) remains immune to that dragon's frightful presence for one day. On a failure, creatures with 4 Hit Dice or less become panicked for 4d6 rounds, and those with more than 5 Hit Dice become shaken for 4d6 rounds.

Sandstorm (Sp): Once per day, this dragon can create a vortex of violently churning sand (range 240 feet). All creatures within 60 feet of the center of the sandstorm take 1d6 points of damage per round and must make Balance checks (DC 15) or fall prone whenever moving more than 5 feet.

Blindsight and Keen Senses (Ex): Blindsight to 180 feet. Darkvision to 600 feet.

Immunities (Ex): Immune to sleep, cold, acid, and paralysis.

Tremorsense (Ex): This dragon can automatically sense the location of anything in contact with the ground, within 500 feet.

Spells Known (as a 7th-level sorcerer 6/8/7/5;): 0—*dancing lights*, *detect magic*, *detect poison*, *mage hand, prestidigitation, read magic*, *resistance*; 1st—*mage armor*, *charm person, cure light wounds*, *harassing weapon†*, *shield*; 2nd—*bull's strength*, *cat's grace*, *enhance magical flow**; 3rd—*dispel magic, suggestion*

* See *The Book of Eldritch Might.*

† See the *Book of Eldritch Might II: Songs and Souls of Power.*

42. The Dragonlock (EL 2)

This square room is empty and featureless, except for the western wall, which bears a series of 4-inch circular plates made of gold, bronze, silver, iron, marble, and wood.

The small round plates are arranged in five rows of six columns, each about three inches apart. Each row contains a single plate of each material, but in a random order, with no two rows the same. This is the key to freeing Saggarintys. Touching each silver plate, one at a time, starting with the bottom row and working methodically upward, causes the glass in Area 41 to disintegrate over the course of 3 rounds, allowing Saggarintys to emerge from stasis. A creature must actually touch the plates for the Dragonlock to function; *mage hand* or similar spells do not count.

Touching the plates in any other order creates a magical force blast that strikes the offender upon touching the second plate. Once the blast occurs, the lock resets (so the next plate is safe).

Magical Blast Trap: CR 2; 2d6 points of force damage, no save; Search (DC 27); Disable Device (DC 34)

43. The Magic Fountain (EL 8)

A stone statue of an elf woman holds a silver ewer that pours a steady stream of water into a 10-foot circular basin. This beautiful fountain has silver highlights in various places, and glistening pearls set into the statue's eyes. As you look on, the woman's head turns, and she asks, "What does it mean to be good?"

This fountain was once the pride and joy of the dragon Saggarintys—his own magical creation. If the statue does not get an answer it likes within 1 minute, it summons four hound archons to attack. The only answers it likes are proactive ones: "Good upholds what is right and stops what is wrong," "Good creatures protect the innocent and punish the evildoers."

A correct answer causes the statue to open the secret door in the room's northwestern corner (otherwise, the party can find it with a Search check, DC 30) and turns the first sip from the pool by any of the characters into a *cure critical wounds potion*. After the PCs answer and face the result (reward or attack), the statue never reacts to them again.

Behind the secret door, a small room opens to a staircase leading up.

Hound Archons (4): hp 32, 34, 36, 40, AC 19, +8 bite (1d8+2) and +3 slam (1d4+1, two attacks), spell-like abilities (at will—*aid, continual flame, detect evil, message, teleport without error*), aura of menace, DR 10/+1, SR 16, celestial qualities, scent, alternate form; see MM, page 29

44. Banebrutes Ambush (EL 7)

Reminder: In this area, the player characters might meet some "Old Friends," as described in Event 5.

The characters emerge from the stairs onto a ledge.

A huge cavern sprawls into the darkness, the stalactite-covered ceiling about 20 feet above the ledge. The bottom of the cavern is nowhere in sight. Iron spikes driven into the ground on the ledge suggest that a rope bridge once spanned the cavern, but it is now long gone.

The floor of this cavern lies 80 feet below, in a jumble of stalagmites and loose rock. The north ledge is at about the same height as a similar one at the south end of the cavern. Both ledges bear the remnants of an old rope bridge that once spanned the cave.

Creatures

Assuming that the PCs have light and are making sound to alert them, eight banebrutes wait on the stairs to the south. When someone climbs, flies, or (conceivably) jumps across to the south ledge, the banebrutes swarm down to attack, most of them aiding one that attempts to bull rush the character off the ledge. When confronted by a threatening force, they retreat up the stairs into Area 45, if they can get there.

Banebrutes (8): hp 10, 11, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 20; see the Banes Appendix

45. Antimagic Cave

Reminder: In this area, the player characters might meet some "Old Friends," as described in Event 5.

The wide cavern here seems natural or mostly so. Its floor and ceiling are lost in the darkness.

The ledges on either side of the wide chasm in this cave bear the remnants of an old rope bridge that once spanned the gap. It is now long gone. The eastern ledge is 30 feet higher than the western one. The ceiling is 50 feet above the western ledge and 20 feet above the eastern one. The floor plunges 90 feet below the western ledge and 120 feet below the eastern. The bottom of the pit holds only scattered rocks and bridge fragments.

Antimagic Field

From the top of the stairs coming from Area 44 to the middle of the passage leading to Area 46, a permanent *antimagic field* was created as a barrier to ward off intruders seeking to reach the Baneheart. Characters relying on *fly* to get across this cave will have to think again.

Development

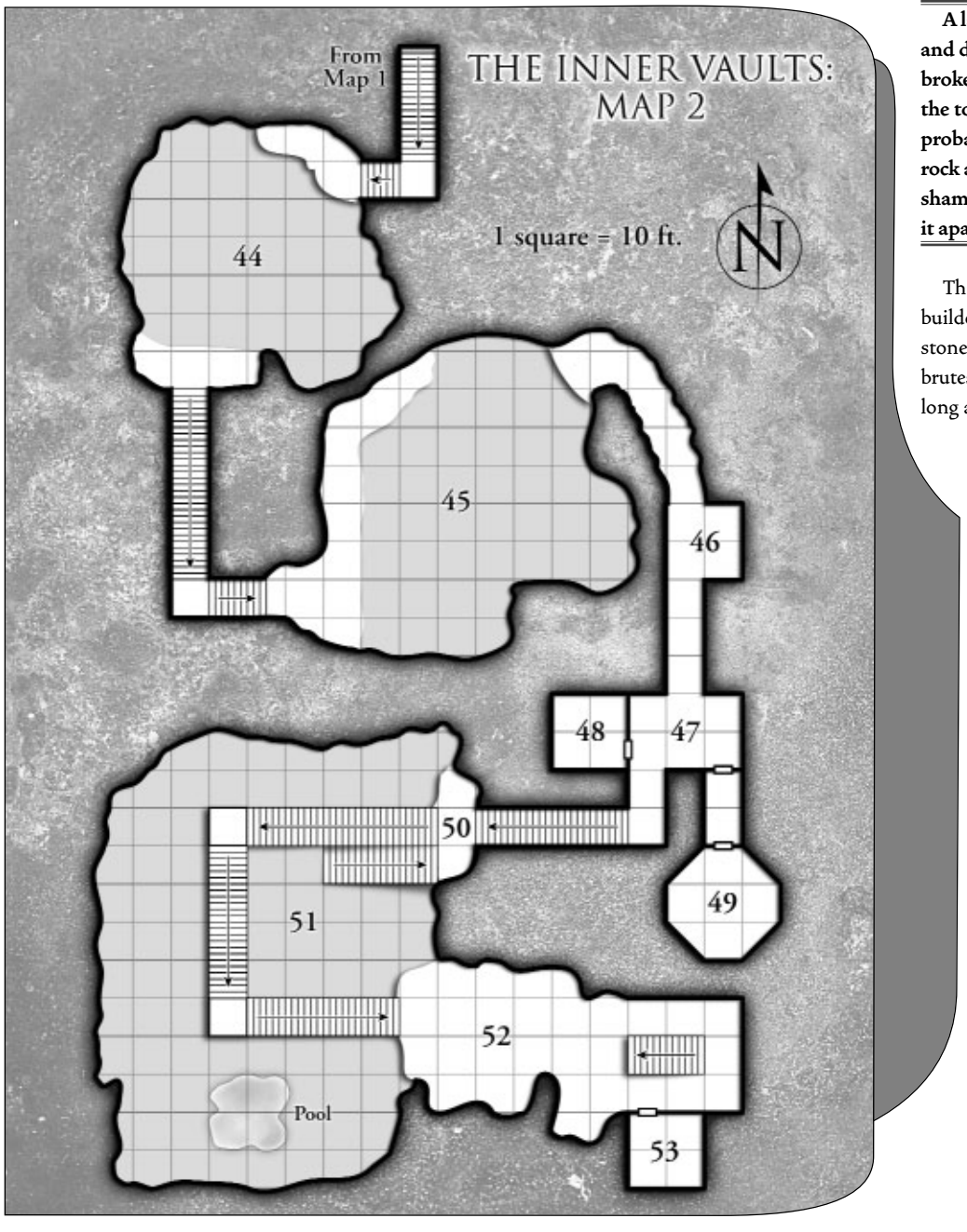
All continuing spell effects are suppressed in this cave. If Avach from the Inverted Pyramid is present, his mental reprogramming and mental tampering is suppressed. He is none too happy that the arcanist group would rewrite his own memories. He tells the player characters the truth about the Inverted Pyramid's plans.

46. Bones and Trash

The floor in this small room is filled with loose rocks, bones, and other debris, including the remnants of many broken tools.

There is nothing of value here.

47. Tattered Shambles



A large iron vat lies overturned and dented here. Around it, you see broken tools, smashed bits of wood, the torn remnants of what were probably burlap bags, and piles of rock and dust. Everything lies in a shambles, as if some wild beast tore it apart.

This was a work area where warren-builders mixed mortar and prepared stones for masonry walls. The bane-brutes (Area 44) wrecked the place long ago.

48. More Warrenbuilders

The door into this room is locked (DC 25 to open)

Five squat humanoids of bronze, their heads and limbs clearly jointed and hinged, rest unmoving on their haunches near the western wall.

These magical constructs are a part of the work force that built much of the Bane-warrens. When anyone enters the room, they stand at attention and wait for a command. However, they only take commands from someone wielding the Banewarrens key. They each have the same statistics as Medium animated objects,

except they have no capability to fight. If ordered to fight, they take no action.

Warrenbuilders (5): hp 11 each, AC 14, construct qualities; see MM, page 17

49. Displaced Vault

The doors at both ends of the hallway leading to this chamber are Vault Doors. (See "Banewarrens Specifics" in the Introduction.)

In the middle of this octagon-shaped room, a round disk floats in midair. On the disk sits a cylindrical iron chest.

When the seismic upheavals occurred in the Banewarrens, this vault got separated from the rest. It remained mostly intact, however, so Danar joined it to the rest of the vaults via the outer caverns and all the stairs. There were traps in the hall, but the upheaval destroyed them.

The disk is a permanent *Tenser's floating disk*. Inside the locked chest (DC 32 to open) is Cartagra, the Affliction of Souls (see the Banes Appendix).

50. Ledge

This huge cavern rises up into darkness—you can't see the ceiling. The floor is at least 30 feet below the ledge near the entrance. A stone staircase goes down to the cavern floor, and another goes up to a 10-foot-wide landing 60 feet to the west and 60 feet up from this ledge. The staircase continues up from the landing, but headed south. The staircases appear to have been hewn from rock formations that perhaps once existed in this huge cave.

If the PC proceed up the stairs, the banebrutes in Area 51 come up and attack.

51. The Cavern of Stairs (EL 9)

Reminder: In this area, the player characters might meet some "Old Friends," as described in Event 5.

The cavern is huge, and the stairs cut right through the center of it. The steps continue south and up 40 feet to another landing, and then east and up another 40 feet to a ledge.

#12

Show the players illustration #12. The ceiling here rises 200 feet above the floor, which is only 30 feet above the southernmost ledge.

Creatures

The bottom of this cave is inhabited by a pack of 12 banebrutes. They attack and fight to the death, often aiding each other's attempts to push foes off the stairs.

Banebrutes (12): hp 9, 10, 11, 11, 13, 13, 14, 15, 16, 18, 18, 19; see the Banes Appendix

Pool

This bubbling, festering pool of thick, purplish liquid is concentrated corruption. From this pool, the banebrutes are given life (such as it is). Touching this liquid bestows a negative level, although multiple touches do not confer multiple negative levels. Characters can attempt a Fortitude save (DC 18) to get rid of the negative level. The cool liquid feels as thick as syrup. If removed from the Banewarrens, it loses all potency after 48 hours.

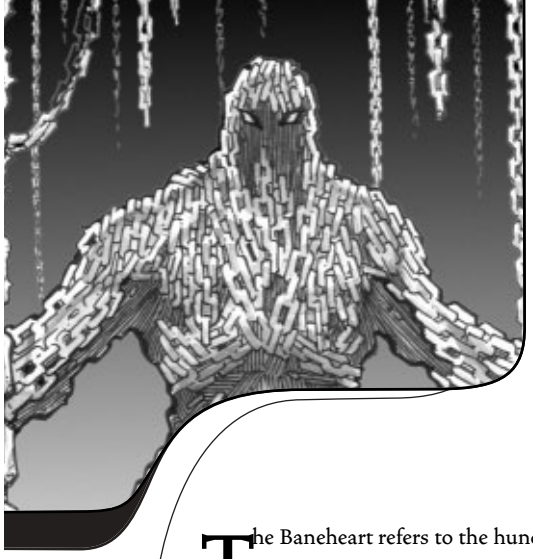
52. The Great Stair

The eastern end of this cave is worked and finished stone. A staircase in the middle of that section heads up to the west. A small door leads to the south.

53. Empty Room

A sun symbol done in cracked and crumbling bas relief decorates the southern wall of this 20-foot-square chamber.

There is nothing of interest here.



Tremoc Korin, the Baneheart

The geological upheaval that created the Spire wrought huge changes upon the Banewarrens. Although Danar's original warding magic kept the vaults intact, the up-thrust of earth scattered them like bubbles in a glass of sparkling wine. In the Inner and Outer Vaults areas, Danar labored to rejoin the vaults and other chambers he created with new passages and stairs. In the Spire, which rises up an impossible 3,000 feet, he tunneled out a central core that would join all the scattered vaults and chambers. Thus, unknown to most, the Spire is essentially hollow. These things he accomplished before turning to evil. (Rumor has it that other vaults and chambers were never reconnected to the Banewarrens in this way. Some of them may be reachable by other, more conventional means, like tunneling, but this is beyond the scope of this adventure.)

The Baneheart refers to the hundreds of vaults within the Spire, joined by the central core. These vaults hold the most terrible of banes, and thus each of the Vault Doors here can be accessed only with a key unique to that door. Even magic such as *teleport, passwall,* or *wish* does not give entry. The keys are stored within Jabel Shammar: the fortress of the Dread One, Eslathagos Malkith. These parameters apply only to the doors directly off the shaft in the Baneheart. The doors farther removed from the shaft conform to the rules for Vault Doors as offered in "Banewarrens Specifics" in the Introduction.

Compared to the impressive wards that kept people out of the Banewarrens for centuries, the magic that seals off Jabel Shammar is an order of magnitude greater still. The Dread One—armed with the greatest of the banes, bearing the knowledge of the *Book of Inverted Darkness*, and tapping into the Banemight itself (see below)—might have been the most powerful mortal spellcaster ever. He possessed power enough to threaten the whole world, and worry even the gods, and he protected his fortress with this impressive might. Further, after his defeat, the forces of light used their own power to seal Jabel Shammar again, should someone ever think to loot it for its dark secrets.

So, with Jabel Shammar unbreachable and thus most of the vaults in the Baneheart unopenable, treat the Baneheart as a shaft with a few open areas. The map on page 102 portrays only a few of the dozens of "levels" inside the Spire. DMs are free to elaborate on these levels and add more accessible areas, as they choose. Certainly, additional open and plundered vaults on the unmapped levels are likely.

Perhaps one day Malhavoc Press will reveal the details of Jabel Shammar—but that would be an adventure for 20th-level characters or higher!

The Banemight

The close proximity of so many powerful banes for so long has created a force unto itself called the Banemight. It is the Banemight that the earth reacted to when it thrust Jabel Shammar (then called Mosul Pearl) and the Banewarrens away, creating the Spire. Eslathagos Malkith, the Dread One, tapped into the power of the Banemight when he attempted to take over the world and recreate it as he desired.

The Banemight is a force potent beyond measure.

Without the knowledge or means to exploit its power, however, it is simply a dire energy field within the Baneheart. It shapes and corrupts everything that remains in long contact with it. It created the banebrutes from nothing but its own powerful essence—but it is not wholly sentient itself. It is just an incredibly powerful evil energy source.

A spellcaster within the Baneheart, at some random point determined by the DM, may make a Spellcraft check (DC 15). Those who succeed realize that they can use the ambient energy within the Baneheart to power their spells there. Each time they cast a spell, they can attempt a Spellcraft check (DC 28). Success means they do not lose the prepared spell or the spell slot. If a caster fails the check, the spell is cast normally. However, the DM should make it clear to the player that the energy is clearly and irrevocably evil. If spellcasters even attempt to tap into its power, this energy will corrupt them utterly, changing their alignment to evil. This is the great temptation of the Banemight.

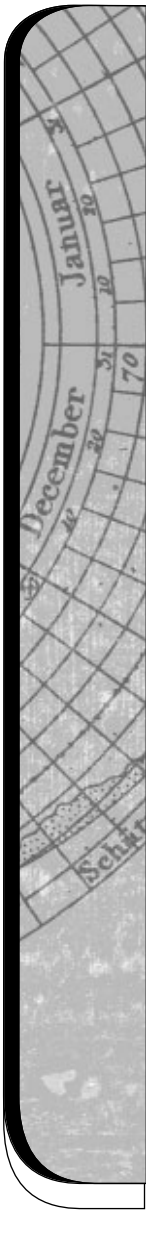
Key to Tremoc Korin

The map in this section details the layout of five different levels of the Baneheart. Each level beyond the first is identified by its elevation from the base of the Spire, just above the highest of the Inner Vaults. Refer back to the sideview map in the "Banewarrens Specifics" section of the Introduction for further detail.

1. Landing

At the top of the stairs lies a room about 50 feet from north to south, and 30 feet from east to west. The vaulted ceiling spans a height of at least 40 feet. Rising almost to the high roof, a metallic statue dominates the chamber. Metal blades and terrible serrated plates have been fashioned to form the foreboding image of a tall, demonic humanoid.

An exit to an even larger chamber is in the northeast corner of this room. The air here feels cold and thick. The tang of charged energy hangs in the room, but you can't quite place its source.



This statue horrifically represents Eslathagos Malkith. It is not magical. The energy felt is the Banemight, and it makes its presence known throughout the Baneheart.

The stairs lead down to Area 52 of the Inner Vaults.

2. The Central Core

A dull bluish glow pervades here. This chamber forms the bottom of a circular shaft that rises up higher than you can see. At various points along the shaft, ledges lined with doors punctuate its impressive height. Each door is a silvery-blue color. Occasionally at these ledges, thin, arched bridges lead from one side of the shaft to the other. The walls are worked gray stone. There are no visible ways of ascending the shaft or reaching those balconies.

On the bottom level, across the smooth stone floor, are six of the aforementioned silver-blue doors. Each appears tightly sealed except for the one in the southeast of the room. It stands slightly ajar.

The shaft goes up approximately 2,500 feet. Getting up and down inside the shaft is tricky, as it was not designed to be navigated without magic (or wings). Climbing the walls without aid of a rope has a Difficulty Class of 15. A ledge with a few doors appears every 50 or 60 feet up the shaft, on average. The doors all appear to be Sealed Doors.The PCs can't open any of them, except as otherwise noted. **Show players illustration #2 (for the doors) and this book's cover (for a representation of the core).**

#2

Creatures

If the player characters are not terribly quiet, their entrance alerts the vrock, Dukett (Listen +13), perched above on one of the balconies. See Area 4 for more information.

3. Empty Vault

This 30-foot-square chamber lies empty. A bronze platform about 6 feet long and 2 feet wide floats about 3 feet above the floor, but there is nothing on it. A closed door leads to the southeast.

This room once held some powerful magical artifacts known as the *Jewels of Suseraigh*. Servants of the Dread One took them when Danar turned to evil and had need of them. Now all that remains is the platform that held them.

Southeast Room

The door is unlocked. The room stands empty except for a pair of broken, black-shafted arrows, a sundered full helm covered in long-dried black blood, and a number of blobs of dried clay. This chamber once held a guardian (a clay golem) that attacked anyone who entered the area. Ironically, the servants of the same being that made the golem eventually destroyed it to get at the *Jewels of Suseraigh*.

4. Dukett's Lair (EL 13)

The unlocked door clearly is no longer sealed. Characters on this level can easily see that it can be opened.

This chamber stinks of feces. In the southwest corner something has built a large nest of bones, cloth, and still stranger things.

The nest is full of sharp, jagged bits of metal, bone, and wood, so characters searching through it must make a Dexterity check (DC 20) to avoid cutting themselves (1d6+1 points of damage). Hidden within the nest is Dukett's tiny treasure hoard, consisting of a gold necklace set with topaz (1,200 gp), a pair of silver combs (worth 50 gp each), a silver flute (worth 120 gp), a gold-framed silver mirror (worth 280 gp), and a ivory *wand of inflict serious wounds* (nine charges).

Creature

Dukett was a servant of Eslathagos Malkith, trapped here when his master was defeated and the warrens sealed. Over the years the creature has grown fairly mad and now thinks of himself as Lord of the Banewarrens. He knows of and hates the Master of Chains (see Area 16) and the grey ogres (Areas 14 to 15), but he avoids them rather than confronting them.

Dukett, Vrock: 70 hp, AC 25, +11 claws (1d8+4, two attacks), +9 bite (1d6+2), +9 rakes (1d4+2, two attacks), DR 20/+2, SR 22, 10-foot reach, many special abilities; see MM, page 41

Possessions: Two *potions of cure moderate wounds*, a leather bag

Tactics

Being an immortal demon, Dukett can survive without eating. Nevertheless, he is very hungry and attacks with starvation-induced fervor. Unless the PCs are particularly silent, he likely attacks them in the shaft. He attempts to swoop down, grab a single victim, and fly up to this chamber to feast. If he suffers more than 20 points of damage before successfully grabbing a character, he flies away. He heals himself with his potions, then returns—preferably when one character is vulnerable, such as during a climb up the side of the shaft.

Dukett knows about the *phylactery of forsaken souls* (Area 6) and the traps (Area 5) to the north, as well as the *sword of lies* (Area 11) and its guardian (Area 9) to the east, but has no intention of using this knowledge. He might, if he must, trade the information for his life. Given that he can just *teleport* away if seriously threatened, however, that seems unlikely.

5. Trapped Room (EL 9)

The door is locked (DC 25 to open).

This room appears empty. A door stands in the northeast corner, and an empty alcove in the southeast corner.

Anyone who steps into this room from the south triggers a pressure plate in front of the door, causing poisoned darts to fire from the alcove to the east.

Poison Dart Trap: CR 6; +10 ranged (1d4 points of damage, plus large scorpion venom—1d6 points of temporary Strength damage x2, Fortitude save, DC 18), six attacks; Search (DC 22); Disable Device (DC 22)

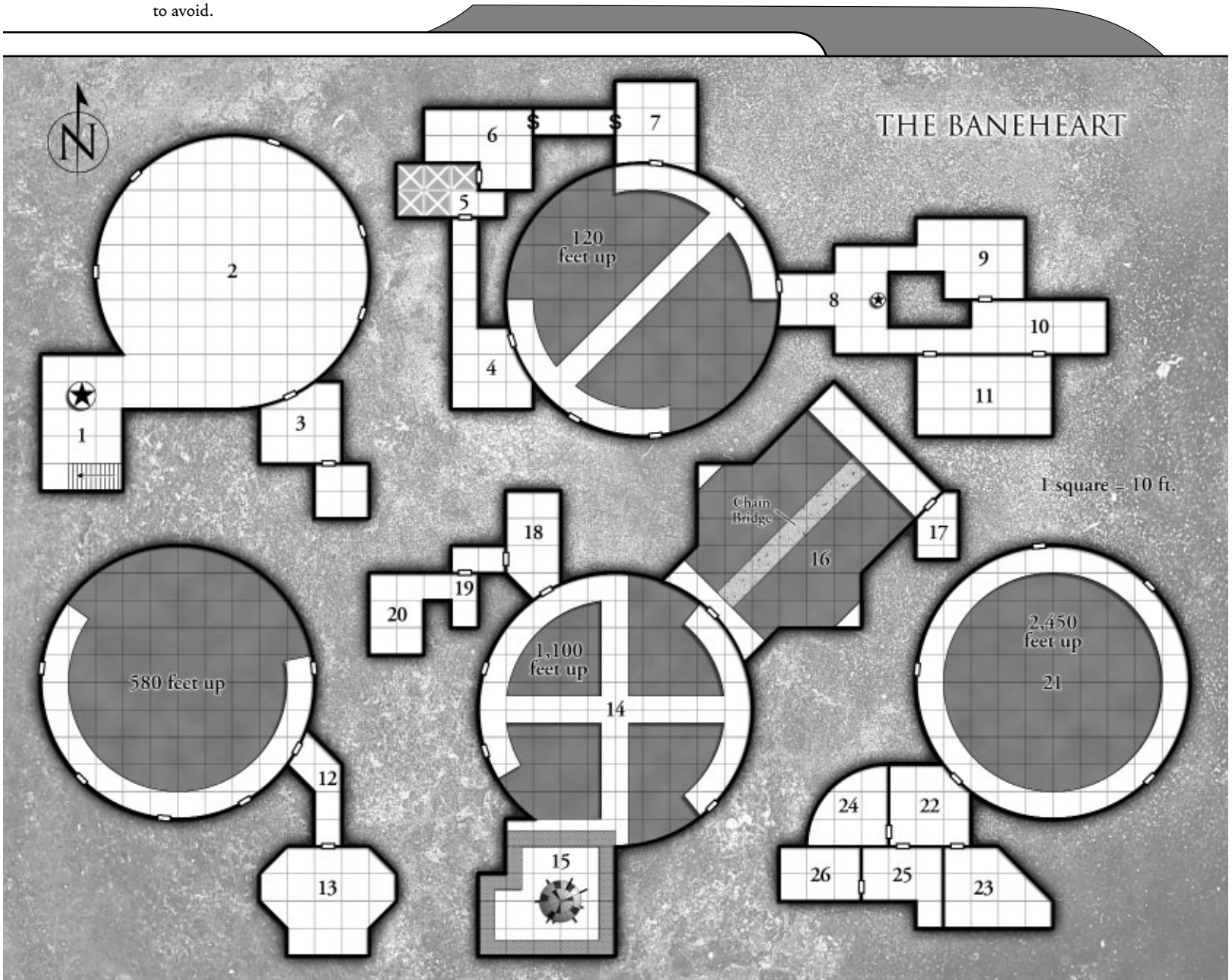
Further, the rest of the floor is made up of 10-foot-square trap doors, all leading to spiked pits 60 feet deep. Only a few inches separates the pits, making them very difficult to avoid.

Spiked Pit Traps: CR 4; 6d6 points of damage +10 melee (1d4 spikes for 1d4+4 points of damage each); Reflex save (DC 20) avoids; Search (DC 20); Disable Device (DC 20)

6. Phylactery of Forsaken Souls (EL 7)

The locked door (DC 30 to open) leading into this room carries a magical trap that petrifies anyone touching it who fails a Fortitude saving throw. Those failing the saving throw, unless they've taken special precautions, are likely to tumble down into the pit in front of the door, shattering their petrified forms.

Petrifying Door Trap: CR 7; petrification (as the *stone to flesh* spell); Fortitude saving throw (DC 19) avoids; Search (DC 31), Disable Device (DC 31)



This room has an old, red carpet on the floor. Upon it sits a glass pedestal surrounded by four silver candlesticks holding white candles. Draped over the top of the pedestal is a red cloth, embroidered with gold threads. On the cloth sits an ivory box about 2 feet long and 1 foot wide and tall. It is covered in skulls, leering demonic visages, and symbols of vileness and evil.

See the Banes Appendix for information regarding the *phylactery of forsaken souls*. Eslathagos Malkith, who used it to create a virtual army of specters, never felt the need to move it from this place.

Other Treasure

The four silver candlesticks are worth 100 gp each, and each holds a *candle of invocation*. The gold-weave red cloth is worth 250 gp.

Secret Passage

Unbeknownst to Danar, one of his evil servants helping to build this vault wanted to make it easy to get at the *phylactery* later. He knew the key to the *phylactery*'s room would be closely watched, so he stole the key to the nearby vault (Area 7) and clandestinely built a secret passage between the two chambers. He never got a chance to use it, however, and thus neither vault is plundered. The secret doors require a Search check (DC 28) to find, and the passage between them is obviously much cruder than the surrounding rooms.

7. Sealed Vault

The door in the southern part of this room is a Sealed Door that cannot be opened other than with its specific key (which is lost). The only way into this room is via the secret passage described above.

A grim chill fills this 30-foot-square chamber. A silver platform 3 feet across hangs from the ceiling, dangling by three slender silver chains about 5 feet above the floor. Resting atop that platform is an ebony skull.

The skull is a special cursed *darkskull.* In order for it to function, a user must soak it for 24 hours in the brain juice of a creature with an Intelligence over 5. After this period, the item functions for 24 hours. These special conditions reduce its market value by half.

8. The Fake Golem

The door is unlocked and no longer sealed. Characters on this level can see clearly that it can be opened.

The open door on this level gives access to a short, wide hall that leads into a larger room. A hulking iron statue of an armored man, standing 12 feet tall, seems to protect the room.

As soon as anyone enters the room, the statue here seems to come to life and prepare to attack the intruders. This is only a ruse from a simple automaton, however, designed to frighten intruders into leaving—and potentially throwing them off when the real golem shows up (see below).

9. The Iron Protector (EL 13)

A skeleton, long dead and darkened with age, lies on the floor: a pile of bones in plate armor next to a longsword and a shield. The corpse lies before yet another hulking iron statue, humanoid in shape, made of jagged iron plates and wicked blades.

Eslathagos Malkith intended to give the *sword of lies* to one of his lieutenants, but when he sent the man down with the key to its vault, the golem overcame him. By then, the Dread One had turned his attention elsewhere, so no one ever took the sword. The lieutenant was a despicable half-elf/half-orc blackguard named Solonar.

Creature

This statue is a true iron golem. It attacks anyone that steps into this chamber, anyone that attacks it, or anyone that touches one of the two doors into Area 11 (it magically knows when that happens and comes lumbering in).

Iron Golem: hp 99, AC 30, +23 blade slash (2d10+11, two attacks), poison gas breath, construct qualities, magic immunity, damage reduction 50/+3; see MM, page 109. This golem uses its blades to attack, but in all other ways it is a standard iron golem.

Treasure

With the lieutenant's skeletal remains are the following valuables: a *+2 longsword, +1 full plate armor*, a *+1 spined shield*, 435 gp (of a very old minting), a gold ring with an emerald worth 1,400 gp, and a large platinum key (worth 250 gp) that fits this vault's Sealed Door and no other. (It has a strong magical aura, but opening the door is its only function.)

10. Hall of Shields

The walls the length of this hall are covered with shields of all sizes. A thick, fibrous carpet of woven strips lines the floor. On the eastern wall is a bold but slightly faded and chipped painting of a warrior with a shield and sword, a blazing sun symbol on his tabard.

A total of 15 masterwork shields hang in this hall.

11. The Sword of Lies (EL 7)

The two doors into this rectangular chamber are locked and trapped. Both require a Open Locks check (DC 25) to open,

but the locks must be opened at exactly the same time. Otherwise, the doors do not open but blast sonic energy out to a range of 10 feet. The only way to open these doors (since the keys are unavailable) is for two characters with the Open Locks skill to work at the same time, or for one such character to work alongside a wizard or sorcerer with a *knock* spell, etc.

Sonic Blast Trap: CR 5; 8d6 points of sonic damage; Reflex save (DC 17) halves; Search (DC 30), Disable Device (DC 30)

In this huge room, eight longswords float in the air, point up. Each is bathed in a reddish glow and has a gold hilt with a large emerald set into the pommel.

This room is enchanted with a variation of the *mirror image* spell. Seven of the swords in the room are fakes—illusions. They disappear when touched and, in doing so, discharge 6d6 points of force damage (no save) to whoever touches them, even if touched from range. Spell energies do not affect the illusions, although other types of spells, such as *true seeing,* would make it very easy to bypass the illusions. Otherwise, when a character attempts to grab, touch, or hit a sword, determine randomly—based on how many swords are left—whether he or she finds the right one.

See the Banes Appendix for more information on the *sword of lies*.

Development

This weapon is what the Church of Lothian is looking for. If their delving team reaches this room and gets the sword, they go no farther.

12. Hallway

One door on the level 580 feet up is unlocked and clearly no longer sealed. Characters on this level can easily see that it can be opened.

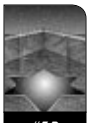
13. The Pendant (EL 10)

When someone opens the door to this chamber, anyone standing in the hallway within 30 feet of the door must make a Will saving throw (DC 25) to avoid being drawn into the magical pendant prison within. To those who make the save, read this text:

The chamber is practically empty. The walls are covered completely in stark blue steel plates, shined almost to a mirror finish. Floating above the middle of the floor hangs a chain with a simple hexagonal pendant made of sapphires arranged in a starburst pattern. It appears quite lovely, although there is no immediate indication of how it floats in midair.

To those who fail the save, read the following description:

You no longer appear to stand within the Banewarrens. Now you see a beautiful starry sky above you. The stars twinkle and shine brighter than any stars you have ever seen, and all of them appear blue. The ground beneath you is blue stone, cut extremely smooth. The horizon looks very close—as though you stand atop a small, strange plateau or the roof of a large, odd-shaped building, the edge of which appears to be star shaped. The whole surface must be no larger than 80 feet across. In the middle of this structure you stand upon is set a smaller, reflective star of blue stone with silver edges. It burns with an azure fire, although you feel no heat.


#13

Show the players illustration #13. This vault holds the *darkstar pendant*, a bane described in detail in the Banes Appendix.

At this point, the group might very well be separated: those who made their saving throws and those that did not. Those who did not have been transported to an extradimensional space—not unlike the Quaan, but even smaller—where the intelligence trapped within the amulet resides. This blue dragon, forever imprisoned, calls herself Darkstar now. The extradimensional space is a strange metaphysical representation of the *darkstar pendant*, floating in a closed sphere of air about 500 feet across. The "pendant" is an 80-foot-diameter hexagon, which the PCs stand upon.

Creature

Darkstar dwells as a spirit within the flames that burn over the central star. If anyone touches the flame, she leaps out of the fire and grows to her full draconic form and size. She tells the PCs that they are her toys and tools for all eternity, for her power is supreme in this, her realm. The truth is actually that she is trapped here and has been for centuries, unable to grow older and sustained without the need for food or water. She no longer wants to leave, however, truly believing herself omnipotent here (her *frightful presence* helps her make this a reality). She bullies and lords over the player characters. Due to this overconfidence, Darkstar is unlikely to use much in the way of strategy or tactics in a fight. She would rather toy with the PCs a while, then fly off the huge pendant for a time, circling around to taunt them.

Darkstar, Young Adult Blue Dragon: CR 10; Large dragon (earth); HD 18d12+72; hp 189; Init +0; Speed 40 feet, fly 150 feet (poor), burrow 20 feet; AC 26 (–1 size, +17 natural); Attack +23 melee (2d6+6, bite), +18 melee (1d8+3, two claws), +18 melee (1d6+3, two wings) and +18 melee (1d8+9, tail); SA Breath weapon, frightful presence, create/destroy water, sound imitation; SQ DR 5/+1, SR 19, immunities, blindsight and keen senses; Face/Reach 5 feet x 10 feet/5 feet; AL LE; SV Fort +15, Ref +11, Will +13; Str 23, Dex 10, Con 19, Int 14, Wis 15, Cha 14

Skills and Feats: Bluff +20, Concentration +22, Diplomacy +20, Escape Artist +18, Listen +20, Search +20, Sense Motive +20, Spellcraft +20, Spot +20; Cleave, Flyby Attack, Hover, Power Attack, Snatch

Breath Weapon (Su): Line of lightning, 80 feet long, every 1d4 rounds; damage 10d8 points, Reflex save (DC 23) halves

Frightful Presence (Ex): This ability takes effect automatically (radius 150 feet) whenever the dragon attacks, charges, or flies overhead. A potentially affected creature (one with less than 18 Hit Dice) that succeeds at a Will save (DC 21) remains immune to that dragon's frightful presence for one day. On a failure, creatures with 4 Hit Dice or less become panicked for 4d6 rounds, and those with more than 5 Hit Dice become shaken for 4d6 rounds.

Create/Destroy Water (Sp): 3x/day. As *create water*, except the dragon can decide to destroy water instead of creating it, which automatically spoils liquids containing water. Magic items (such as potions) and items in the creature's possession must succeed at a Will save (DC 21) or be ruined.

Sound Imitation (Ex): Will save (DC 21) to detect

Blindsight and Keen Senses (Ex): Blindsight to 150 feet; darkvision to 500 feet

Immunities (Ex): Immune to sleep, electricity, and paralysis

Spells Known (as a 3rd-level sorcerer 6/6): 0—*dancing lights, detect magic, detect poison, read magic, resistance*; 1st—*cure light wounds, mage armor, shield*

Meanwhile, in the Real World...

A character can safely grab the pendant in the vault. Anyone examining it (Search, DC 20) notices the word "Darkstar" engraved in small letters on the back of it. If someone wears the pendant and says this name, everyone trapped within it appears in the room. If this should occur, Darkstar is stunned for 1d3+1 rounds, surprised and terrified to be out of her extradimensional realm. If the wearer says "Darkstar" again, everyone within 50 feet must make a Will saving throw (DC 25) to avoid being drawn back into the magical pendant-prison. Should this happen, Darkstar willingly fails the saving throw.

14. The Cross Bridge (EL 10)

Warning: In this very dangerous encounter, characters may fall over 1,000 feet!

Three separate ledges, two with doors and one with a wide opening, comprise this level. They are joined by a cross-shaped bridge across the middle of the shaft. The bridge itself is slightly arched, making the middle about 5 feet higher than the ends. The 10-foot-wide bridge is littered with miscellaneous bits of armor and equipment—rope, packs, hooks, tools, spikes, and so on.

Although some worthwhile items lie amid the gear on the bridge, nothing magical or even masterwork can be found. Close examination of the equipment (Search, DC 12) reveals not only a bad stench but tufts of long, animal-like hair—and even a few bloodstains.

If characters move more than 5 feet in a round during combat on the littered bridge, they must make Balance checks (DC 10) or fall. (DMs should tell players of this hazard before the PCs attempt such an action—it's obviously treacherous.) Roll 20d6 points of damage for any character who falls. A character surviving the damage from the fall should be assumed to have actually landed on a bridge or ledge 100 or so feet below rather than falling all the way down.

Creatures

Six grey ogres have called this level home for some time. Grey ogres are fiendish creatures bred by Eslathagos Malkith long ago. These six serve the Master of Chains in Area 16, but only because they fear him so much. They only survive because they, like their kyton master, eat the food they can create magically in Area 18. Once in a while they use ropes to lower themselves down to other ledges, but they are afraid of the vrock below (Area 4), so they don't stray far. As you can imagine, they are extraordinarily bored and thus eager for a good combat—it gets so tiresome just fighting among themselves.

The ogres breed quickly but not profusely, and they mature quickly as well. This group has two males and four females. One is quite young but has the same stats as the rest.

They live primarily in Area 15, but as soon as anyone shows up in this area, they charge in to attack. Because they have lived their whole short lives in this shaft, they prove very adept at fighting on the ledges and bridges. Evolution has granted them a +2 circumstance bonus to making bull rush opposed rolls, and they gain a special Reflex save (DC 20) to grab onto the side if they do fall off. They never need make Balance checks to run around on a bridge or ledge.

Grey Ogres (6): CR 3, hp 22, 25, 27, 30, 31, 39, AC 16, +8 huge greataxe (2d8+7) or +1 huge longspear (2d6+5, thrown), 10 foot reach, cold and fire resistance 10, DR 5/+1, SR 8; see MM, page 144

Experience Adjustment

Award an additional 20 percent experience-point bonus for XP earned in this encounter.

15. The Warding Sanctuary

The ledge abuts an iron mesh catwalk that forms the upper of this chamber's two levels. At the bottom, a huge metal device—like an iron tower topped with a silver sphere—rises up at least 30 feet high. The catwalk follows the wall, 25 feet above the lower level.

The central tower is cylindrical with a 10-foot diameter. A number of jointed metallic extensions, like the legs of an

insect, extend from the tower and connect to the ground or simply jut out into the air at all angles. The top sphere measures about 15 feet across, comprising half the structure's height. A series of curved plates fit together carefully to form its silver skin. Each bears a single arcane rune etched into its surface. A few plates depict images of silver dragons.

The catwalk and the bottom level are littered with junk—bits of equipment, weapons, and pieces of armor. Much of it is broken or in poor repair.

#1

Show the players illustration #1. The towerlike device is a *warding generator*—a powerful magical item Danar built to maintain the magical wards that seal the Banewarrens. A character making a Knowledge (arcana) check (DC 20) can identify this structure for what it is, and a Knowledge (arcana) check (DC 25) identifies the exact connection between this device and the Sealed Doors. This *generator* is obviously similar to those seen in Chapter Three, Area 6; Chapter Five, Area 6; and Chapter 8, Area 24. This one maintains the power of the wards protecting the Baneheart. (Note, however, that it does not power the seals on the individual vaults.)

The *generator* has a total of 1,000 hit points, hardness 10, and a Break DC of 60. If anyone deals more than 100 points of damage to the *generator*, a flare of magical energy inflicts 5d6 points of force damage to anyone within 50 feet of it (Reflex saving throw [DC 20] halves). If the *generator* suffers another 100 points of damage, it emits another identical flare of energy and stops working. If this happens, even the *sealing rod* (see Area 24) cannot seal the Baneheart area without someone first repairing this *generator*. The parts and tools needed for such repairs are in the first Sealed Door Area, Area 9 (see Chapter Three), along with information on the difficulty of the repairs and the time required to make them.

Creatures

While the grey ogres described in Area 14 live here most of the time, the PCs most likely will encounter them on the bridge.

Treasure

A successful Search check (DC 18) of the junk littering the room allows a character to find a few valuables: a masterwork set of thieves' tools, a gold and ebony urn worth 800 gp, and three flasks of alchemist's fire.

16. The Master of Chains (EL 10)

This chamber is filled with chains that hang down from the ceiling. Most are connected to the ceiling on just one end, but others drape down in the center with both ends attached to the ceiling. The links of the chains look crude in their manufacture—as if someone made them by taking metal objects, tearing them to bits, and weaving the pieces into chains. That would explain why these chains are covered in sharp edges and jagged corners.

A pit runs across the room, measuring about 60 feet across. A bridge made of chains spans the gap, and a humanoid figure—tall, dark, and heavily shadowed—stands in the middle of it. He is wrapped from head to foot in chains, but he is not bound. They seem more like flesh than bonds.

#14

Show the players illustration #14. Movement and combat here is greatly hampered by the jagged, spiky chains. All attacks suffer a –2 circumstance penalty in this room. Characters moving more than 10 feet in a round here must make a Balance check (DC 15) or scrape against a hook (50 percent chance, character suffers 1d6 points of damage) or get caught or tangled (50 percent chance, character must spend a standard action getting free). Of course, the inhabitant of this chamber makes no such checks.

Everyone in the room more than 10 feet apart has 50 percent cover. Characters more than 30 feet apart have 100 percent cover.

The Pit

The pit is 60 feet deep and filled with loose, unconnected chains. If the Master of Chains somehow ends up in the pit (he might lower himself into the pit, but it's doubtful he would fall in), he can use these chains as easily as those hanging above.

Creature

The Master of Chains is an advanced kyton, ancient even by devil standards. He was a prisoner in the Banewarrens until freed by Eslathagos Malkith. Now he waits, biding his time until someone finally comes and opens the Banewarrens and brings a key so he can liberate still more banes to use for himself. He has mastered the grey ogres who live in Areas 14 and 15, but if he hears the sounds of combat, he does not move to investigate. He has far too much of an advantage by remaining in this chamber.

The Master of Chains, Kyton (Advanced): CR 8; Medium outsider; HD 16d8+48; hp 123; Init +8; Speed 30 feet; AC 23 (+5 Dex, +8 natural); +20 melee (1d8+4, two chain rakes); SA Dancing chains, unnerving gaze (DC 19); SQ Blindsight, DR 20/+2, SR 22, cold immunity, regeneration 2; Face/Reach 5 feet x 5 feet/10 feet; AL LE; SV Fort +13, Ref +15, Will +11; Str 19, Dex 20, Con 16, Int 10, Wis 12, Cha 13

Skills and Feats: Climb +20, Craft (blacksmithing) +16, Escape Artist +21, Jump +20, Listen +19, Search +8, Spot +19; Alertness, Improved Critical (chain), Improved Initiative, Power Attack.

Possessions: The *diabolis configurator* (see the Banes Appendix)

Tactics

On the first round of this encounter, the Master backs up on the bridge until he stands 30 feet from the entrance. Now the intruders must move into the room even to see him. He readies an attack with his dancing chains ability, commanding the chains to attack the first character who comes within range (20 feet). If he can entice more than one nonflying character to get onto the chain bridge with him, he uses his dancing chains ability to force the end of the bridge nearest the entrance to give way, dropping everyone on the bridge down into the pit unless they make a Reflex save (DC 20) to grab onto a chain (inflicting 1d6 points of damage upon themselves from the barbs). Of course, thanks to his mastery of chains, the ones on the kyton's body attach to the bridge and hold him up without a problem. He can climb 30 feet up the chains as a move-equivalent action that same round, probably getting him safely to the other side of the pit.

17. Empty Vault

The door to this small chamber hangs open. The room appears empty.

This room once served as the resting place of the *diabolis configurator.* (See the Banes Appendix for details.)

18. The Snare

The doors to this vault have long since been forced open. Within the room you see a strange five-faceted stone pyramid about 4 feet tall. A loop of iron about a foot across is set into each of the four sides (but not the bottom) of the small structure. Dark brown stains cover the floor around it, and the place smells foul.

When anyone touches this strange, unnamed bane, it magically grabs a small animal—a bird, a rabbit, a squirrel, a fish, or something similar—from the outside world, shreds it, and spits the remains out of one of the loops. The nearby inhabitants use this to bring them food to eat.

19. Trapped Hallway (EL 8)

The door at the north end of this room is locked (DC 30 to open). When someone opens the door, poisoned spears fire with incredible force from holes in back wall of the southern alcove.

Poisoned Spear Trap: CR 8; three spears each make a +15 attack with deathblade poison (1d8+10 points of damage, 1d6 points of temporary Constitution damage now, 2d6 points of temporary Constitution damage one minute later); Fortitude save (DC 20) to resist the poison; Search (DC 24); Disable Device (DC 25)

20. Star of Blood (EL 3)

A blood-red ruby rests on a black marble pedestal in the middle of this room.

This bane is a *star of blood* (see *The Book of Eldritch Might*). Touching it, however, sets off a *glyph of warding*.

***Glyph of Warding*:** CR 3; 5-foot lightning burst (3d8 points of damage); Reflex save (DC 15) halves; Search (DC 28); Disable Device (DC 28)

21. Top of the Shaft

The shaft ends here, with a ledge running around to five doors. One of them hangs half open, apparently damaged. Here and there, you see scorch marks and smashed stones, as if a great battle had taken place here. A broken sword hilt lies on the ledge near its south end. In the ceiling, a hole 20 feet across leads up to an even higher level.

This was the site of the Dread One's last battle. Mighty heroes, including the elf wizard Maeritha Moonrise (see Chapter Six), fought against him here, although the battle actually started above, in Jabel Shammar. The broken sword hilt was part of a holy sword that shattered in the battle. Now, it holds antique and historical value (worth perhaps 1,000 gp to the right buyer), but nothing else.

The hole in the ceiling leads to Area 1 of the Dread One's Path (see Chapter Ten).

22. Battle Site

The doors leading from this room barely hang on their hinges, except for the south-facing door in the southwestern corner. The rest of the doors are also blackened and scorched. The stone walls within bear similar marks—some are even blistered and melted in spots, as if burned by incredible heat or acid, or both. The room feels cold now, though, and the air almost seems to vibrate.

This is another room that saw action during the battle that brought about the Dread One's defeat. The chamber is considered *unhallowed*, per the spell. The southeastern door is a Vault Door (see "Banewarrens Specifics" in the Introduction).

23. Skeleton of a Hero

The cold tension in the air grows even stronger here. Broken bits of equipment and armor lie on the floor, rusted and decayed. A skeleton juts out of the south wall, as if hurled into the wall and imbedded there. Broken stones lie at its feet. Black bloodstains mar the floor near the door.

This room is considered *unhallowed*, as described in the spell. The skeleton was once a great fighter named Zachary Hedron. After the battle, his surviving friends took his belongings with them to give to his family. Others who fell were taken to be *raised*, but the spell that slew Zachary ensured his permanent death.

The blood is from the Dread One. If anyone so much as touches those stains, the character contracts both *demon fever* and *devil chills* (as found on page 75 of the DMG).

24. The Sealing Rod (EL 14)

The walls here are reddish-black, stained by some unknown cataclysm. The cold presence here resembles nothing you have ever felt before. It claws at your soul and numbs your whole body. Sprawled against the curved wall opposite the door lies a tatter of black rags.

The rags are all that remain of the Dread One's form. Anyone entering this room, coming this close to his essence, must make a Fortitude saving throw (DC 20) or suffer 1d4 negative levels. This room is considered *unhallowed*, as described in the spell, and divine spells over 3rd level granted by good-aligned gods do not function in it.

The True Death of the Dread One

Eslathagos Malkith had prepared a great many contingency spells. When he fell in battle, the core of his spirit, along with most of his powerful personal items (like the Book of Inverted Darkness*, which he carried with him at all times) was transported back to the fortress of Jabel Shammar. The wisest of sages suspect that he removed these items there so he could return for them one day, or have someone else bring him back. Some say his essence returned to his fortress after his final battle, but that the battle with the heroes had brought Danar's old, benevolent self to the fore again. The legendary figure took his own life, they say, after destroying the artifacts of evil that he had collected in his fortress. No one knows for sure the exact fate of these artifacts.*

The Rags

Any character who touches the rags automatically contracts both *demon fever* and *devil chills* and must make a Fortitude saving throw (DC 20). Failure causes a character to be cursed to suffer a permanent –4 penalty on all attack rolls, saving throws, and checks until receiving a *remove curse* cast by a 15th-level caster. Further, disturbing the rags stirs up a dozen wraiths, each just a fraction of the Dread One's evil essence, although none are his true spirit. They scream and moan as they attack in fury, mourning the death of Eslathagos Malkith.

Wraiths (12): hp 28, 29, 31, 32, 32, 35, 39, 42, 45, 49, 53, 60, AC 15, +5 incorporeal touch (1d4 points of damage plus 1d6 points of permanent Constitution drain), undead, incorporeal, +2 turn resistance; see MM, page 185

Treasure

Within the rags, the PCs can find a short metal rod topped with a beautifully crafted dragon's head. This is the *sealing rod,* a magic item that allows the user to seal the Banewarrens back up again. They also find a pair of diamond rings with black metal bands, each worth 5,000 gp. However, the rings are tainted with evil. Until a caster of at least 15th level places a *remove curse* spell on each of the rings individually, a demon with Hit Dice equal to that of the rings' possessor comes once per day at a random time to attack that character. This effect applies separately for each ring.

The rags also hide the silver tip of a spear. If someone with the Craft Magic Arms and Armor feat spends 5,000 gp to prepare a new shaft, this tip can again become part of a functional *+2 holy spear* (type of spear is up to the person doing the repair and recreation). The spear head has resisted the taint of evil so far.

No portion of the Dread One's body remains, and most of his equipment is gone.

Development

Yaeshla the elven dagger (see Chapter Six), if present, contends that this chamber should hold another part of the *staff of shards*, for this is where the *staff* was broken in the retributive strike that destroyed the Dread One. She says someone must have taken it after the battle, and after the heroes left.

25. Nasty Magical Trap Room (EL 10)

The doors into this room are Vault Doors. (See "Banewarrens Specifics" in the Introduction.)

This room pulses with swirling, violet energy.

Passing through this pulsing energy requires a Fortitude saving throw (DC 23). Those who fail are affected by a *Mordenkainen's disjunction,* then *plane shifted* to a random plane. The energy here is obvious, but it cannot be disabled by a rogue or dispelled in any way short of a *wish* or the act of a divine being.

26. The Black Grail

The door into this room is a Vault Door. (See "Banewarrens Specifics" in the Introduction.)

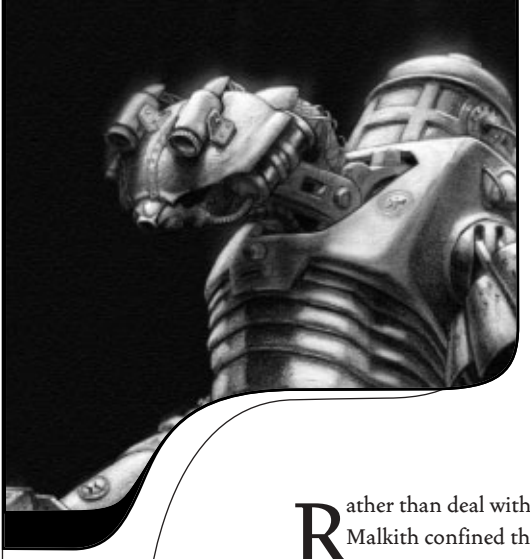
Atop an altarlike stone against the western wall sits a black cup, distinguished by small skulls around the lip and a few dark gems set into its sides.

This is the *Black Grail*†. The Pactlords of the Quaan seek this object, and all evil beings who know of its existence lust after it. The *Grail* is a powerful evil artifact described in the *Book of Eldritch Might II*. Its presence has *unhallowed* the room.

† See *Book of Eldritch Might II: Songs and Souls of Power.*

Development

If the PCs take this bane, they can expect the Pactlords and other evil entities to hound them for a very long time.



The Dread One's Path

At the top of Tremoc Korin, directly below Jabel Shammar's immediate dungeons, lies a strange extradimensional area known as the Dread One's Path. This was so named because the Dread One created it as he literally carved his way through the planes to get at the Antithesis Stone, *an artifact described in the* Book of Inverted Darkness. *He sought to use the stone to convert all Danar's old good-aligned allies to his current outlook. He found the* Stone *in its mysterious dark egg and used it on the angel known as Bastion, transforming him into the Malificite. This was a poor choice, however, for the Malificite turned against him while the Dread One warred with most of the known world.*

Rather than deal with him personally, Eslathagos Malkith confined the Malificite in the Dread One's Path and put one of his huge magical war machines, called a *doomwalker*, in place to act as a guardian, with capable servants always on hand here and in Jabel Shammar to control the construct. When the Dread One fell in battle, the Malificite took a few of his former master's possessions and retreated here, to his old prison—but not before slaying all those who controlled the *doomwalker*. That done, he went to sleep until some undisclosed future time.

The Dread One's Path exists in many planes at once. Should characters decide to tunnel through the walls of the Path itself, they would likely come out in a random plane. (The random shift does not occur if characters break through the walls of the inner chambers, however; see Areas 1 to 4.)

Simply entering the Dread One's Path is extremely dangerous. A strange interplanar fungus grows in this dimensional corridor, giving off deadly spores. Characters in the Path must make a Fortitude saving throw (DC 18) every minute or suffer 1d4 points of temporary Constitution damage. Further, the extraplanar energies work on a bizarre mental level throughout the Path. Living non-outsiders in the Path must make Will saving throws (DC 16) every 10 minutes or feel a strange magical compulsion, "the call of the multiverse." Those who feel this call suddenly shift off into another plane—never to be seen again.

The "proper" way to deal with this, the adventure's climax, is for the PCs to use the *doomwalker* construct to visit the Path remotely, rather than venturing there personally. However, it is possible for a sneaky group to move into the Path stealthily and—assuming they deal with the wyverns in Area 6 quietly or not at all—sneak past the Malificite while he sleeps.

Event: The Pactlords Arrive

The Pactlords of the Quaan finally procure another *wish*. This time, they use it to *wish* some of their most powerful forces to the location of the most powerful artifact in the Banewarrens, mistakenly believing that to be the *Black Grail*. They are wrong—it is the *Antithesis Stone.* They further *wish* others of their group to appear near their enemies (the PCs) in a surprise attack.

Stage this encounter while the PCs are using the *doomwalker*. With Pactlords appearing at the end of the Path (Area 8) and in the control room (Area 3), the characters will really have their hands full.

In the Path

The following Pactlords appear at the end of the Dread One's Path (Area 8):

Ferendis, Adult Half-Fiend Red Dragon: CR 16; Huge outsider (fire, chaotic, evil); HD 22d12+132; hp 275; Init +6; Speed 40 feet, fly 150 feet (poor); AC 32 (+2 Dex, –2 size, +22 natural); +33 melee (2d8+13, bite), +28 melee (2d6+6, two claws), +28 melee (1d8+6, two wings), +28 melee (2d6+19, tail slap); SA Breath weapon, frightful presence, half-fiend spell-like abilities, locate object; SQ Blindsight, acid resistance 20, cold resistance 20, electricity resistance 20, DR 5/+1, SR 21, immunities, keen senses; Face/Reach 10 feet x 20 feet/10 feet; AL CE; SV Fort +19, Ref +15, Will +16; Str 37, Dex 14, Con 23, Int 20, Wis 17, Cha 18

Skills and Feats: Bluff +26, Concentration +28, Diplomacy +26, Escape Artist +24, Knowledge (arcana) +27, Knowledge (geography) +27, Knowledge (history) +27, Knowledge (religion) +27, Listen +25, Scry +27, Search +27, Sense Motive +25, Spellcraft +27, Spot +25; Cleave, Flyby Attack, Hover, Improved Initiative, Power Attack, Snatch

Breath Weapon (Su): Cone of fire, 50 feet long, every 1d4 rounds; damage 12d10 points, Reflex save (DC 27) halves

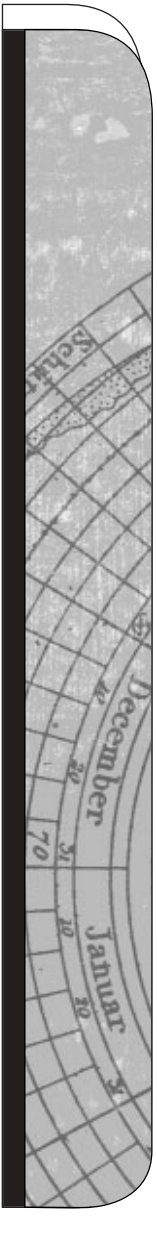
Frightful Presence (Ex): This ability takes effect automatically (radius 180 feet) whenever the dragon attacks, charges, or flies overhead. A potentially affected creature (one with less than 22 Hit Dice) that succeeds at a Will save (DC 25) remains immune to that dragon's frightful presence for one day. On a failure, creatures with 4 Hit Dice or less become panicked for 4d6 rounds, and those with more than 5 Hit Dice become shaken for 4d6 rounds.

Locate Object (Sp): This dragon can *locate object* six times per day as the spell of the same name.

Blindsight and Keen Senses (Ex): Blindsight to 180 feet; darkvision to 600 feet

Immunities (Ex): Immune to sleep, poison, and paralysis.

Half-Fiend Spell-Like Abilities: 3x/day—*darkness, poison, unholy aura*; 1x/day—*desecrate, unholy blight, contagion, blasphemy, horrid wilting, summon monster IX* (fiends only), *destruction*



Spells Known (as a 7th-level sorcerer 6/7/7/5;): 0—*detect magic, detect poison, ghost sound, light, mage hand, ray of frost, read magic*; 1st—*endure elements, mage armor, cure light wounds, shield, true strike*; 2nd—*bull's strength, cat's grace, blur*; 3rd—*haste, dispel magic*
Possessions: *Bone Quaan ring, ring of X-Ray vision*

Sarth, Male Bugbear Ftr8: CR 10; Medium humanoid; HD 3d8+6 + 8d10+16; hp 99; Init +2; Speed 30 feet; AC 19 (+2 Dex, +3 natural, +4 armor); Attack +16/+11 melee (1d12+8, greataxe), or +18/+13 ranged (1d8+9, longbow); SV Fort +9, Ref +7, Will +3; AL LE; Str 20, Dex 14, Con 15, Int 10, Wis 10, Cha 6
Skills and Feats: Climb +11, Hide +4, Jump +15, Knowledge (religion) +2, Listen +3, Move Silently +4, Spot +3, Swim +8; Alertness, Blind-Fight, Cleave, Dodge, Point Blank Shot, Power Attack, Precise Shot, Rapid Shot, Weapon Focus (longbow).
Possessions: *+1 mighty composite longbow* (+5), 10 *+3 arrows, +1 greataxe, +1 studded leather armor, potion of fly, bone Quaan ring*, 102 gp

Sarth rides on Ferendis' back, firing arrows. If he has to, however, he will drink his potion and *fly* in to attack. Obviously, if the PCs encounter the dragon and rider when they are not in the *doomwalker*, they are in for a real challenge and probably will have to run away. The Pactlords do not know not to wake up the Malificite, however; if they do wake him, the evil angel attacks everyone. Keep in mind that both Sarth and Ferendis are vulnerable to the fungus spores and "the call of the multiverse" as described above.

In the Control Room

At the same time, however, Pactlords come into the control room (Area 3):

Chast, Athach: hp 130, AC 20, +13/+8 huge battleaxe (2d8+9) and +13 huge battleaxe (2d8+5, two attacks) and +14 bite (2d8+4 plus poison), 15-foot reach; see MM, page 21
Possessions: Three *+1 huge battleaxes, bone Quaan ring*

Vo-Nul, Phase Spider: hp 59, AC 17, +7 bite (1d6+4 and poison), etherealness; see MM, page 150
Possessions: *Ring of the true phase* (see page 44), *bracers of armor +2, bone Quaan ring*

S'Errit, Male Lizardfolk Clr6: CR 7; Medium humanoid; HD 2d8+2 + 6d8+6; hp 51; Init +2; Speed 20 feet; AC 27 (+1 Dex, +5 natural, +8 armor, +3 shield); Attack +9 melee (1d4+4, 2 claws); SV Fort +6, Ref +7, Will +8; AL NE; Str 18, Dex 15, Con 13, Int 10, Wis 17, Cha 16
Skills and Feats: Concentration +9, Heal +8, Knowledge (religion) +5, Listen +9, Spot +5, Swim +7; Craft Wand, Spell Focus (evocation), Toughness
Possessions: Masterwork full plate armor, *+1 large wooden shield*, *wand of cure moderate wounds* (40 charges), *wand of hold person* (heightened to 4th-level spell [DC 16], 38 charges), *bone Quaan ring*, 29 gp, holy symbol
Domains: Evil, Water
Spells (5/4+1/4+1/3+1): 0—*cure minor wounds* (2), *detect magic, read magic, resistance*; 1st—*bane, cure light wounds, divine favor, entropic shield, protection from good*; 2nd—*bull's strength, endurance, fog cloud, silence, spiritual weapon*; 3rd—*cure serious wounds, magic vestment, magic circle against good, protection from elements*

The player characters most likely have already encountered Vo-Nul (see Event 4 in Chapter Five). In any event, the mission of the phase spider and his group is to kill the PCs. They attempt to do so in as straightforward a manner as possible. The difficult thing for the PCs is that if they leave the *doomwalker* unattended, it probably will be destroyed.

Chast and S'Errit arrive ethereally with Vo-Nul. Chast simply wades into battle with his axes, while Vo-Nul attacks, retreats to the Ethereal, then appears somewhere else to attack, repeating that tactic over and over. S'Errit enters the fight with these spells already active: *divine favor, entropic shield, protection from good, bull's strength, endurance, magic vestment,* and *protection from elements* (fire). These castings modify his stats as follows: +3 bonus to attack and damage, +12 hit points, +2 bonus to Armor Class (+4 bonus versus good), +1 bonus to Fortitude saves. Once he arrives, he supports the others with healing and *hold person* spells. They all fight to the death, except for Vo-Nul, who retreats ethereally if his side is losing.

Key to the Dread One's Path

Although the Dread One's Path exists on many planes at once, it remains an extension of this plane. All spells and effects are handled normally there.

1. Hole

This 20-foot-wide circular hole is surrounded by a black iron railing about 3 feet high.

This hole leads down into Area 21 of the Baneheart.

2. Elevator

This 20-foot-square iron platform bears a dark skull, emblazoned on its surface.

If this elevator still functioned, it would take characters up into the lowest levels of Jabel Shammar. It no longer operates, however. It has been deactivated with no sign of how to reactivate it; perhaps multiple *wishes* might do so.

3. The Control Room

Reminder: A group of Pactlords may appear here as part of the event at the beginning of this chapter.

Along the eastern wall of this room sits a long, low table with six silk-cushioned chairs in front of it. On the table, before each chair, rests a silver helmet. A red cord of twined copper threads connects to each helm and to a device that hangs from the ceiling. The chandelierlike device is bejeweled with diamonds and rubies set into a silver mesh. The mesh wraps around a hollow glass core that is shaped like an upright cylinder about a foot tall. Hanging on the wall near the table is a framed picture depicting a 20-foot-tall metal statue.

A helmet fits over the wearer's entire head, including the face. A character who dons one of the helms can no longer see the contents of this room. After just a moment of queasy transition, however, the character can see a stone wall. The helmet grants the wearer the ability to see through the eyes of the *doomwalker* construct in Area 4.

Anyone without a helmet on can see the glass cylinder in the device begin to pulse with white light while someone else is wearing one. Each of the six helmets here is keyed to a different control point on the construct. See Area 4 for more information. The helms do not function outside this room.

The "framed picture" is actually a magical mirror that always depicts the *doomwalker* and its location. Right now, it displays the construct in Area 4. As the PCs experiment with the helms here, unhelmeted characters can see the effects of their efforts in this mirror.

4. The Doomwalker

Use this text only if the PCs get into the room, somehow. However, it's not essential that they enter this room in order to see and control the *doomwalker;* the control room (Area 3) is designed for that purpose.

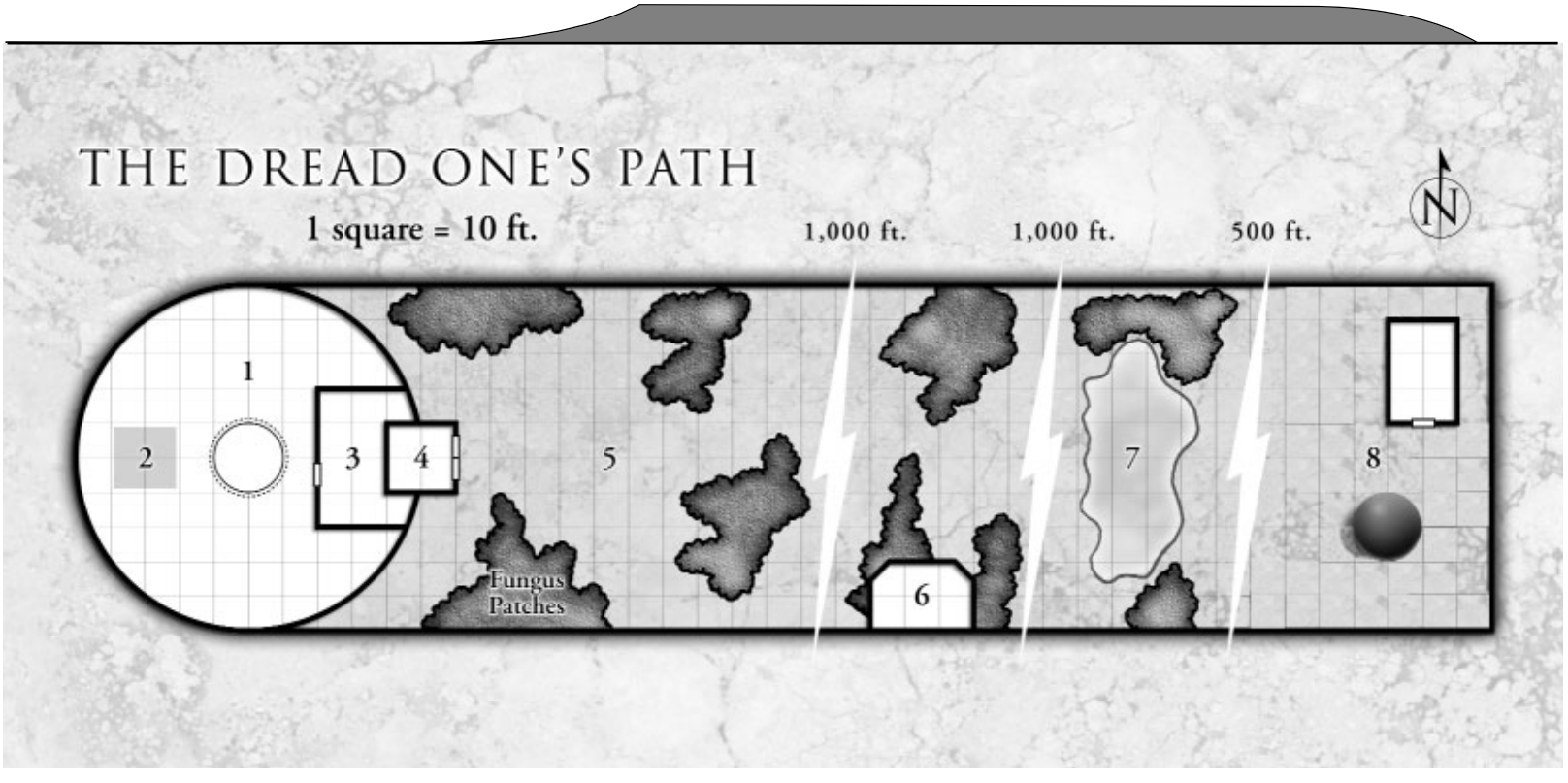
Filling this large, stone-walled chamber is a huge, humanoid-shaped creation of bronze and steel. At least 20 feet tall, this monolithic construct stands motionless, lifeless.

If removed from the Dread One's Path and adjacent rooms, the *doomwalker* ceases to function. It has the following stats:

Doomwalker: Huge construct; HD 30d10; hp 165; Init +0; Speed 30 feet (see below); AC 28 (–2 size, +20 natural); Attack +25 melee (2d12+13, two slams, see below); Face/Reach 10 feet x 10 feet/15 feet; SA See below; SQ Construct qualities, DR 30/+3; SV Fort +10, Ref +10, Will +10; AL N; Str 36, Dex 10, Con —, Int —, Wis 11, Cha 1

#15

Show players illustration #15. Each helmet connects with one control position for the *doomwalker* construct. Wearers instantly know the functions at their command. The machine's six control positions are as follows:



1. Head

The head is the default control position. If only one person is available to control the construct, the character must use this helm. From this position, if no other helms are used, a PC can make the *doomwalker* move at a speed of 30. If it is stopped, the head controller can make the *doomwalker* pick up an object or otherwise use a single arm. At any time, the controller can turn the construct's head.

The head also possesses a weapon system. If the head makes no other actions in a given round, it can breathe a cone of fire 100 feet long that inflicts 10d8 points of damage (Reflex saving throw [DC 15 + controller's Dexterity modifier] halves). This breath weapon is a supernatural ability that can be used every 1d4 rounds.

Lastly, the head controller can cause objects held in either hand to *teleport without error* into Area 4. This requires a standard action, so the weapon cannot be used at the same time.

The *doomwalker* draws on this controller, adding the character's Dexterity modifier to its Armor Class and Reflex saving throw bonus.

2. Chest

The chest has two built-in weapons. The first is a poison gas spray that shoots a 50-foot cone. Anyone within the cone must make a Fortitude save now (DC 20) and another a minute later or suffer 1d6 points of temporary Constitution damage. The second weapon is a jet that sprays acid in a line 5 feet wide and 60 feet long; it inflicts 6d6 points of damage (Reflex saving throw [DC 15 + controller's Dexterity modifier] halves). Either, but not both, of these weapons can be used once per round, and both are supernatural.

XP for Doomwalker Controllers

While controlling the doomwalker, *the player characters put themselves at only slight risk: They remain remote from their actual foes, and they gain the ability to deal with challenges that far outclass them normally. Give the PCs only half the experience normally awarded for deeds accomplished while controlling the construct.*

The *doomwalker* draws on this controller, adding the character's Constitution modifier to its Fortitude saving throw bonus, and the character's Wisdom modifier to its Will saving throw bonus.

3. Right Arm

The right arm is used primarily for making melee attacks. When the construct makes a slam attack, the arm's controller adds his or her own *base* attack bonus to the *doomwalker*'s. The controller can also use the arm to pick up and manipulate objects.

4. Left Arm

The left arm does not make slam attacks, but it can make grapple attacks. The controller makes a touch attack using the construct's attack bonus plus his or her own *base* attack bonus. If successful, the controller and the target make opposed attack rolls. Creatures grappled by the left arm lose all Dexterity bonus to Armor Class, and the right arm can make attacks at a +4 circumstance bonus.

Lastly, the left arm controller also controls an arm-mounted spear thrower, which projects a single huge longspear with great force per round (inflicting 2d8+13 points of damage). The controller of this arm adds his or her own *base* attack bonus to the *doomwalker*'s when the construct makes a spear attack. It cannot make a spear attack and a grapple attack in the same round. The weapon holds 21 spears.

5. Right Leg

If controllers occupy both this position and the left leg position, the *doomwalker* can move and take other actions at the same time. The movement rate of the *doomwalker* increases to 50 feet, and it can run (at twice this speed) and jump as well as walk. Further, the person at the right leg control position can activate the construct's self-repair functions. Every other round, this controller can repair 2d10 points of damage to the construct.

Lastly, the right leg controller also operates a hip-mounted spear thrower that projects a single huge longspear with great force per round (inflicting 2d8+13 points of damage). The controller of this leg adds her own *base* attack bonus to the *doomwalker*'s when it makes a spear attack. The construct cannot attempt a spear attack and complete repairs in the same round. The weapon holds 13 spears.

6. Left Leg

If controllers occupy both this position and the right leg position, the *doomwalker* can move and take other actions at the same time. The movement rate of the *doomwalker* increases to 50 feet, and it can run (at twice this speed) and jump as well as walk. If the *doomwalker* does not move in a given round, the controller can make this leg stomp on the ground. Anything on the ground within 50 feet must make a Balance check (DC 18) or be knocked prone and stunned for 1 round.

Lastly, the left leg controller also operates a hip-mounted spear thrower that projects a single huge longspear with great force per round (inflicting 2d8+13 points of damage). The controller of this leg adds his own *base* attack bonus to the *doomwalker*'s when the construct makes a spear attack. It cannot attempt a spear attack and a stomp attack in the same round. The weapon holds 13 spears.

5. The Path

This long hallway is almost 100 feet wide and tall. From the bare earth floor here, fungi grows as in a thick forest, including mushrooms, puffballs, and other growths, including prodigious amounts of a strange purplish-blue fungus.

The Path is illuminated by some mysterious ambient light with a slightly reddish hue. Ahead, the Path continues as far as you can see—at least a quarter mile, probably more.

As mentioned at the beginning of the chapter, the fungus gives off harmful spores.

6. The Wyvern Roost (EL 11)

A shelf 50 feet from the floor, 30 feet wide, and 20 feet deep hosts a number of large, snaky reptilian forms with wings.

Six wyverns, created by the Malificite, wait atop this tall pillar for intruders who might disturb his sleep. Under the effects of an *imbue guardian** spell, they need not eat or sleep, do not age, gain a +4 bonus to Spot checks, and maintain constant *true seeing*. One remains "on watch" at all times, with a Spot check bonus of +17. It rouses the others if it detects anything, and they all swoop down to destroy the intruders.

* See *The Book of Eldritch Might*.

Wyverns (6): hp 50, 55, 62, 64, 71, 86, AC 17, +9 sting (1d6+4 points of damage plus poison) and +4 bite (2d8+2 points of damage) and +4 wings (1d8+2, two attacks) or +9 claws (1d6+4, two attacks), 10-foot reach, improved grab, scent; see MM, page 186

Experience Point Adjustment

These creatures are not much threat against the *doomwalker*. Reduce XP awards for this encounter by an additional 50 percent if the PCs use the construct—it's something of a "test run" for the *doomwalker*'s controllers.

7. The Pool

A large pool of murky water crosses most of the corridor's width here. It looks about 30 feet to the far shore.

The pool plunges to a depth of 40 feet. The *doomwalker* becomes vulnerable here, as it cannot swim or maneuver in water. The construct might jump across the pool with a running start as long as it has two leg controllers.

8. The Malificite (EL 15)

Reminder: A group of Pactlords may appear here as part of the event at the beginning of this chapter.

At the end of the long Path, the fungi disappear and a small stone building, 30 feet across and 20 feet tall, rises up from the floor. It sits a little to the left of the center of this mammoth corridor. The walls are straight and finished with masonry-cut blocks—this is no natural cave.

Above the building and to the right floats a large charcoal-black, egg-shaped object. The lusterless and dead-looking egg floats on its end. It measures about 40 feet in height and half that in width at its broad base. Carved into this huge egg is what appears to be a stern, angelic figure with two pairs of wings and a sword.

The Malificite sleeps in the little stone house. He is a tall, ebony-skinned angel with four pairs of blood-red feathered wings and a bald head. His eyes glow with yellow hate. The approach of the *doomwalker* (or, say, a huge red dragon) wakes the Malificite. Otherwise, make +5 Listen checks for him to see if he wakes up due to regular noise.

The Malificite has lost all spellcasting powers due to his corruption. His spell-like abilities have changed to the following: at will—*continual flame, darkness, dispel magic, unholy blight, improved invisibility* (self only), *lesser restoration, bestow curse, contagion*, and *fear*; 3x/day—*blade barrier, flame strike,* and *slay living;* 1x/day—*earthquake, greater restoration, shapechange*, and *symbol* (any). He has lost all celestial qualities except for the following: fire resistance 20; electricity, cold, acid, and petrification immunity; and +4 saves versus poison.

The Malificite, Evil Planetar: hp 180, AC 32, +23/+18/+13 huge greatsword (2d8+13), 10-foot reach, DR 30/+3, SR 30, regeneration 10; see MM, page 30

Possessions: *+3 huge flaming greatsword*

Tactics

If the Malificite awakens, he is angry. If he sees the *doomwalker* he says, "I should have destroyed that piece of trash a long time ago."

Primarily, he likes to fight just with his *greatsword* (often invisibly), using his other powers only if he needs a new tactic or a ranged attack. He might attempt to lure the *doomwalker* to Area 7 and use his *earthquake* ability to topple it into the water. (Use of this ability also would collapse the roof down onto the *doomwalker* and open a rift to a random plane.) The Malificite could also potentially *shapechange* into a red dragon more powerful and massive than Ferendis, if the mood struck him.

If he is losing a battle with the *doomwalker*, the evil planetar flies toward the *doomwalker*'s room (Area 4) to smash his way through the back wall to the control room (Area 3). (The stone walls are 3 feet thick, hardness 8, 540 hit points, Break DC 50) This is dangerous not only because of the Malificite, but because it floods the inner rooms with the fungus spores.

Treasure

Inside the building here, the Malificite keeps a variety of collected valuables in a pile. It includes 1,309 gp, 874 pp, a silver crown with emeralds (worth 6,500 gp), *+1 beast bane*

nunchaku, a *figurine of wondrous power* (*bronze griffon*—the command word is engraved on the bottom), and a piece of the *staff of shards*. This last item looks like a wooden rod with a large bronze tip fitted to one end. If fitted onto Yaeshla, the elven dagger, the two together function as a *rod of wonder* as well as a long-hafted *+1 dagger*.

The Dark Egg

#16

Show players illustration #16. The egg floats 25 feet in the air. Any character can pass through its black surface as if the egg were incorporeal. Anyone who does so is flooded with negative energy, for the egg is a direct conduit to a dark and terrible plane made of nothing but negative energy. Characters within the egg suffer 1d6 negative levels per round. Malificite created the image of himself on the egg to announce himself master of this territory that once held him prisoner.

Floating in the middle of the dark egg is the *Antithesis Stone* (see the Banes Appendix). Touching it or taking it is obviously extremely dangerous, unless one is already consummately evil.

The *Staff of Shards*

When all three portions are assembled, the staff of shards *becomes a long wooden staff with a bronze tip and a silver head. When it is reassembled, consider it fully charged. The* staff of shards *in many ways resembles a* staff of power, *but treat it as a minor artifact.*

The powers below cost one charge each:

- Magic missile *(five missiles)*
- Invisibility
- Levitate
- Lightning bolt *(heightened to 5th level, 10d6 points of damage, DC 17)*

The following powers drain two charges each:

- Cone of cold *(15d6 points of damage, DC 17)*
- Charm monster *(DC 16)*
- Wall of force

The wielder of the staff of shards *may use it to smite opponents, striking as a* +1 quarterstaff. *If one charge is expended (as a free action), the staff causes double damage (triple damage on a critical) for 1 round. All powers of the staff are cast at 15th level.*

A staff of shards *can be broken for a retributive strike. The breaking of the staff must be purposeful and declared by the wielder, or it happens automatically when it comes in contact with the Dread One (or any of Eslathagos Malkith's body parts, such as his hand: the Banewarrens key). All charges currently in the staff are instantly released in a globe with a 30-foot radius. All within 10 feet of the broken staff take points of damage equal to eight times the number of charges in the staff; those between 10 to 20 feet away take six times the number of charges in damage; and those 20 to 30 feet distant take four times the number of charges in damage. Successful Reflex saving throws (DC 17) reduce the damage sustained by half. This effect automatically destroys the Banewarrens key.*

A character breaking the staff normally has a 50 percent chance of shifting to another plane of existence in the process; those who don't shift to another plane are destroyed by the explosive release of spell energy. If the staff breaks through contact with the Dread One, its breaker either is sent to another plane (50 percent chance) or is automatically thrown into a coma for 1d10 days, but is otherwise fine eventually. The three broken portions of the staff then lie dormant for 1d100 years before recharging and regaining the ability to rejoin back together as the staff.

Conclusions

This large adventure can take many twists and turns, and it can have many endings. Not everything will play out in the order presented here. The PCs might reach the Dread One's Path before going to the Quaan. They might decide at the end to go take on House Vladaam directly or hunt down the Pactlords wherever they are. They may even hold a grudge against the Inverted Pyramid and attempt to deal with them.

From the standpoint of the Banewarrens itself, it would be good for the PCs to acquire the *sealing rod* and use it to reseal the doors that have opened. If they then destroy the Banewarrens key with the *staff of shards*, all the better.

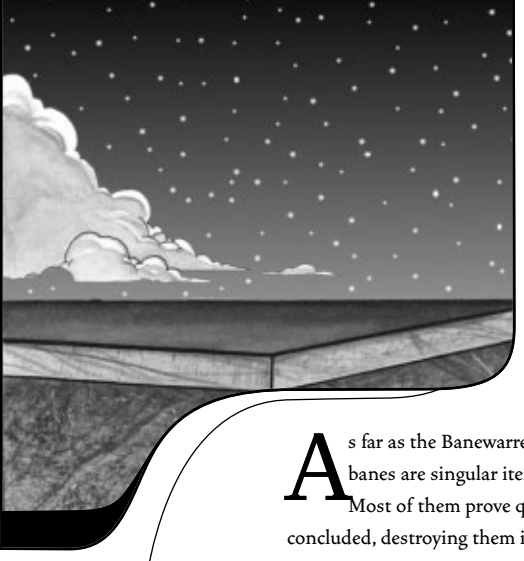
But even using the *sealing rod* to seal all the doors isn't really enough. As the Pactlords proved, if one can get into the Broken Seal Area, a *wish* spell can get you past the first Sealed Door, and then, presumably the others. If the PCs want to be absolutely thorough, they should complete the *warding generator* in the Broken Seal Area so that, when they reseal that section of the warrens, nothing can breach the walls or teleport in. That way, no one can even get at any of the doors to use a *wish* spell. The Banewarrens will truly be sealed from all mortal magic.

Of course, the player characters may give up or fail. Perhaps NPC heroes will take up the task and deal with the problem. Or perhaps slowly, one by one, banes begin to make their way up into the city—some as weapons in the hands of villains, others as plagues or curses loosed upon the populace. This continues to happen as more people and groups explore the warrens, until someone goes down there and does something about it. If the Pactlords of the Quaan get hold of the *Black Grail*, they begin gathering an army of thralls, enhanced and controlled by its evil liquors.

If the Church of Lothian gets hold of the *sword of truth*—despite Inverted Pyramid fears—they do *not* start a new Inquisition against arcanists. Should Iristul Vladaam return to the city and learn that someone has killed his daughter, he will hunt down the killer, *hungersword** in hand.

Further adventures are numerous. Can the Quaan be restored to its former pleasant nature? Can House Vladaam find a way to the caverns of the Natharl'nacna beneath the Banewarrens? Can Jabel Shammar be entered and explored? Is the Dread One actually gone for good? It's up to you to decide.

* See *The Book of Eldritch Might.*



Banes Appendix

A bane is a general term for any sort of manifestation of material evil in the world: a monster, an item, a curse, a disease, and so on.

As far as the Banewarrens itself is concerned, most of the banes are singular items or creatures, usually of great power. Most of them prove quite difficult to destroy. And, as Danar concluded, destroying them is not always the best option.

Magic Items and Artifacts

Some of the banes that can be found in the Banewarrens are magic items, some are artifacts. All are completely evil.

Magic Items

Axe of Previous Wounds: This unique +1 magic weapon always seems to have a bloody blade. Five times per day, it can be used to *inflict moderate wounds* upon a foe within 30 feet (no touch attack required). The axe actually recalls a grievous wound the creature already suffered. A foe who has never suffered a wound (DM's discretion) is immune to the axe's power, and the axe makes attacks against this character at a –2 luck penalty. The wielder must bathe the axe in at least 10 hit points' worth of his own blood each night in order for it to function at all the next day.

Caster Level: 3; *Prerequisites:* Craft Magic Arms and Armor, *inflict moderate wounds; Market Price:* 12,000 gp

Candle of Desecration: While this candle burns, it affects the area 50 feet around it with a *desecrate* spell. It can burn up to three hours.

Caster Level: 3; *Prerequisites:* Craft Wondrous Item, *desecrate; Market Price:* 300 gp

Darkstar Pendant: When someone wears this pendant and speaks the command word, everyone within 50 feet (including the wearer) must make a Will saving throw (DC 25) to avoid being drawn into the magical extradimensional prison within the pendant. Characters within the prison have no need of air, food, or water, and they do not age. When a wearer speaks the same command word again, all those trapped within the pendant are freed. After the first time a wearer uses the pendant, she automatically fails the saving throw to avoid imprisonment the next time she must make it (the wearer does not know this). Anyone wearing or even possessing this item is also cursed with a –2 penalty on their attack rolls, saving throws, and checks.

Caster Level: 20; *Prerequisites:* Craft Wondrous Item, *imprisonment; Market Price:* 80,000 gp

Diabolis Configurator: This green iron bracer is a boon to any devil or other lawful evil outsider. Such a creature wearing the item adds a +5 profane bonus to its SR and a +2 profane bonus to its Strength, Dexterity, and Constitution scores.

Caster Level: 9; *Prerequisites:* Craft Wondrous Item, *nightmare; Market Price:* 20,000 gp

Disk of Dissolution: This red stone disk measures about 6 inches across. Once per day, its possessor can use it to touch an object or creature and *disintegrate* it, as the spell (except that touch is required). Users, however, must make Fortitude saving throws (DC 19) or be *disintegrated* themselves each time they activate it.

Caster Level: 11; *Prerequisites:* Craft Wondrous Item, *disintegrate; Market Price:* 16,000 gp

Gem of Evil Visions: The possessor of this gem is continually beset with mental images of violence and depravity. Nightmares torment his dreams. The images desensitize the owner, so he gains a +4 bonus to all saving throws versus fear.

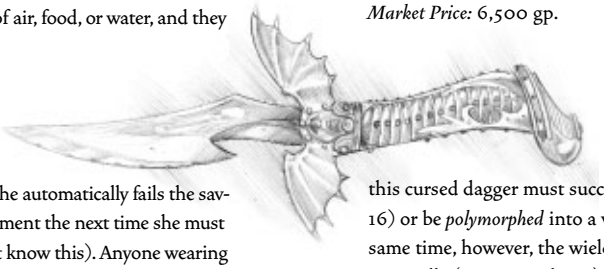
Caster Level: 9; *Prerequisites:* Craft Wondrous Item, *nightmare; Market Price:* 4,000 gp

Lich's Hand: This skeletal hand can be commanded to float near the owner, and it follows wherever she goes. The owner can give the hand a wand, and it can use the wand as if it had the proper spell list. The hand uses the wand whenever the owner so commands, but the command is a free action for the owner. The hand must remain within 2 feet of the owner for this ability to work.

Caster Level: 7; *Prerequisites:* Craft Wondrous Item, *mage hand, animate dead; Market Price:* 24,000 gp

Lying Skull: Once per week, this item can be used to cast a *commune* spell with 10 questions for the servant of an evil god. There is a 10 percent chance that any given answer is a lie. If the same question is asked more than once, the answer is always the same.

Caster Level: 9; *Prerequisites:* Craft Wondrous Item, *commune; Market Price:* 6,500 gp.



Vargouille Knife: This *+1 dagger* has a hilt guard that looks like outstretched batwings with a screaming face between them. Anyone struck by this cursed dagger must succeed at a Fortitude saving throw (DC 16) or be *polymorphed* into a vargouille (see MM, page 182). At the same time, however, the wielder is automatically *polymorphed* into a vargouille (no saving throw).

Caster Level: 7; *Prerequisites:* Craft Magic Arms and Armor, Craft Wondrous Item, *polymorph other, polymorph self; Market Price:* 6,000 gp

Artifacts

Antithesis Stone: This powerful major artifact looks like a smooth, bone-white rock that can easily fit in a human's hand. Any non-evil creature touching the stone with bare skin must make a Will saving

throw (DC 24) or become permanently and irrevocably evil. Spell resistance is ignored, as is any special resistance to enchantments. The law/chaos component of the character's alignment does not change. The stone can alter even a being of pure good. Someone who makes a successful save against the stone's effect becomes immune to it.

Phylactery of Forsaken Souls: This ornate box, a minor artifact, is covered with evil images and unholy symbols. When someone opens the phylactery, a spectre comes out. The spectre is free willed (although an evil cleric could try to control it) and attacks all living creatures it comes upon—even the one that opened the phylactery.

Sword of Lies: This minor artifact is a *+2 unholy longsword* that grants the wielder SR 18 and acts as a *bane* weapon versus anyone with levels in an arcane spellcasting class. It allows the wielder to cast *misdirection* three times each day.

However, if the powerful enchantment that curses the sword is removed (by a 20th-level caster), the sword becomes the *sword of truth.* This artifact loses the unholy ability and the ability to cast *misdirection.* Instead, it allows *true seeing* continually. It also keeps the *bane* ability and the spell resistance.

Poisons

Shasak Poison Powder: This greenish powder inflicts 1d6 points of temporary Constitution damage and 1d6 points of temporary Strength damage, as well as 1d6 points of permanent Constitution drain, and 1d6 points of permanent Strength drain a minute later. The Fortitude save DC is 20. Each dose is worth 5,000 gp.

Diseases and Curses

Cartagra, the Affliction of Souls: This magical disease is transmitted by mere contact. Resisting it requires a Fortitude save (DC 20), and it has no incubation time. Each day the disease inflicts 1d6 points of temporary Wisdom damage and 1d4 points of temporary Charisma damage. Each time a character suffers damage, she must make a second save to ensure that 1 point of the damage does not become a 1-point permanent drain. Only magical healing can save a character affected by this malady—specifically, a *remove disease* spell cast by at least a 10th-level caster.

Necrophagon: This terrible malady, also called skinbite fever, compels its victims to slice off and devour their own flesh. The disease animates its victims even as they eat themselves to death, giving them an undeniable hunger for flesh. They become ghouls that also carry the disease. The Fortitude save DC is 14, and the incubation time is one day. Victims devour 4d6 of their own hit points each day until they are dead.

Vampiric Mist: This greenish mist normally travels as the wind takes it, keeping to a coherent cloud about 10 feet across; it does not dissipate. Anyone the mist touches must make a Fortitude saving throw (DC 20) or become a vampire over the next 1d6+3 anguish-filled rounds.

Monsters

Banebrute

Medium Monstrous Humanoid
Hit Dice: 2d8+4 (13 hp)
Initiative: +0
Speed: 30 feet, climb 30 feet
AC: 13 (+3 natural)
Attacks: 2 Claws +4 melee
Damage: Claws 1d4+2
Face/Reach: 5 feet by 5 feet/5 feet
Special Attacks: Transformation
Special Qualities: Slow fall (100 feet), scent
Saves: Fort +1, Ref +4, Will +2
Abilities: Str 15, Dex 11, Con 14, Int 7, Wis 8, Cha 6
Skills: Climb +11, Hide +10, Listen +5, Spot +3
Feats: Alertness

Climate/Terrain: Any mountains and underground
Organization: Gang (2–4) or pack (10–20)
Challenge Rating: 1
Treasure: Standard
Alignment: Always chaotic evil
Advancement: By character class

Banebrutes are muscular humanoids with gray leathery skin and sunken white eyes. They are created by the presence of extremely powerful evil forces allowed to literally saturate the same locale for centuries—such as the Banewarrens.

When people first encounter banebrutes, they often see them fighting among themselves. While they watch, they see that the creatures' wounds seem to heal instantly. Many may take this as some sort of special immunity, but actually that's not the case. The wounds inflicted by banebrute claws always heal instantly, but they transform the victim's flesh into banebrute flesh (so banebrutes can never truly harm each other). Thus, they can transform other living beings into creatures like themselves, adding to their numbers.

Banebrutes have no need for food, water, or air. They do not age. They do nothing but fight and destroy. They often shriek or gibber, but they can understand Common.

Combat

Transformation (Su): The wounds inflicted by a banebrute's claws heal instantly, but the clawed flesh transforms into banebrute flesh. When a creature has suffered an amount of damage from banebrute attacks equal to its hit points, the creature has changed completely into a banebrute. Banebrute flesh can be restored to normal flesh by any sort of magical healing. A creature turned completely into a banebrute can be restored to normal only through application of one of these spells: *heal*, *greater restoration*, *regeneration*, *wish,* or *miracle*.

Slow Fall (Ex): Like a monk, a banebrute can fall safely up to 100 feet if within 10 feet of a wall that can slow its fall.

Skills: A banebrute gains a +4 racial bonus to Climb and Hide checks.

Banebrute Characters

Banebrutes favor the barbarian class. Groups of banebrutes usually have a few barbarians in their ranks, although they do not recognize them as leaders.

The Betrayed

Medium Undead
Hit Dice: 10d12 (65 hp)
Initiative: +6 (+2 Dex, +4 Improved Initiative)
Speed: 20 feet
AC: 28 (+2 Dex, +8 natural, +8 masterwork full plate armor)
Attacks: Slam +10 melee
Damage: Slam 1d6+7 and energy drain
Face/Reach: 5 feet by 5 feet/5 feet
Special Attacks: Turn living, energy drain, Wisdom drain, *desecrate*
Special Qualities: Undead, +2 turn resistance, damage reduction 10/+1, cold and electricity resistance 10, *gaseous form*, fast healing 5
Saves: Fort +3, Ref +7, Will +8
Abilities: Str 20, Dex 14, Con —, Int 13, Wis 18, Cha 20
Skills: Bluff +11, Climb +3, Hide +10, Jump +3, Knowledge (religion) +13, Listen +14, Move Silently +10, Search +8, Sense Motive +13, Spot +16
Feats: Alertness, Improved Initiative, Lightning Reflexes, Power Attack, Skill Focus (any craft or profession)

Climate/Terrain: Any land and underground
Organization: Solitary or pack (2–5)
Challenge Rating: 9
Treasure: Standard
Alignment: Always chaotic evil
Advancement: —

The betrayed are a very specific type of vampire. They are undead creatures given unlife as their mortal faith is utterly crushed and they believe their god has forsaken or betrayed them. Unlike standard vampires, the betrayed remain bound not to a coffin, but to an object of their former faith, such as an altar or shrine.

The betrayed appears just as they did in life, although their features often seem hardened and feral, with a predatory look. A halo of broken holy symbols orbits the creature's head at all times. The betrayed does not use weapons but does wear armor, usually emblazoned with a disfigured holy symbol. Remember that the betrayed does not use evil unholy symbols—it uses desecrated good symbols instead. It is the embodiment of goodness broken, not of evil for evil's sake.

The betrayed speak Common.

Combat

The betrayed use their inhuman strength in melee, preferring to focus their attacks against clerics and paladins, using the shake faith ability alone, with its terrible energy and Wisdom drain attacks.

Turn Living (Su): The betrayed can turn living beings the same way clerics can turn undead, as a 10th-level cleric. This includes the ability to destroy creatures of 5 Hit Dice or less. This is a fear effect, so paladins remain immune. For purposes of this ability, divine spellcasters have +2 turn resistance, as do all characters with at least a 16 Wisdom score; divine spellcasters with a Wisdom score of 16 or higher therefore enjoy +4 turn resistance).

Energy Drain (Su): Living creatures hit by the betrayed's slam attack receive one negative level. The Fortitude save to remove the negative level has a DC of 20. This attack occurs at the same time as the Wisdom drain, if the betrayed wishes.

Wisdom Drain (Ex): The betrayed can inflict 1d4 points of permanent Wisdom drain by touch. This attack occurs at the same time as the energy drain, if the betrayed wishes.

Shake Faith (Su): Using its cunning intellect and knowledge of religion, the betrayed can ascertain whether a character is a faithful worshipper of a god. If so, the betrayed can take a free action to speak terrible secrets that force the character to make a Will save (DC 20) or find his faith shaken. While this ability is only unnerving to a normal character, those with divine spellcasting abilities lose them for 1d4 rounds afterward. The betrayed can force its victims to make these saving throws every round if they stay close enough to hear the creature. (A *silence* spell negates this ability.)

Desecrate (Sp): The area in a 50-foot radius around the betrayed falls under the effects of a *desecrate* spell. Further, once per day the betrayed can *desecrate* an area, as the spell (as a 12th-level cleric), then leave the effect behind.

Undead: Immune to mind-influencing effects, poison, sleep, paralysis, stunning, and disease. Not subject to critical hits, subdual damage, ability damage, energy drain, or death from massive damage.

Gaseous Form (Su): Like a vampire, the betrayed can use a standard action to assume *gaseous form* at will, as the spell cast by a 6th-level sorcerer. It can remain gaseous indefinitely and has a fly speed of 20 feet with perfect maneuverability.

Fast Healing (Ex): The betrayed heals 5 points of damage each round, as long as it retains at least 1 hit point. If reduced to 0 hit points in combat, it automatically assumes *gaseous form* and attempts to escape. It must reach its faith-centered home within two hours or be utterly destroyed. Once at rest in its home, it regains 1 hit point after one hour, then resumes healing at the rate of 2 hit points per round.

Skills: The betrayed receives a +4 racial bonus to Bluff, Hide, Listen, Move Silently, Search, Sense Motive, and Spot checks.

Repelling and Slaying the Betrayed

The betrayed is equally vulnerable to some attacks effective against vampires. Although the betrayed is not affected by garlic, running water, or mirrors, a strongly presented holy symbol makes it recoil. The presentation doesn't harm the betrayed, it merely keeps the creature at bay. The touch of a holy symbol by one who believes in its power burns the betrayed for 2d4 points of damage.

Simply reducing the betrayed's hit points to 0 or below incapacitates it but doesn't destroy it. Destroying the altar or shrine that it is tied to, while it is reduced to 0 hit points, destroys it utterly. However, certain attacks can slay the betrayed. Exposing it to direct sunlight disorients it: It can take only partial actions and is destroyed utterly on the next round of sunlight if it cannot escape. Driving a wooden stake through the betrayed's heart instantly slays the monster. However, it returns to life if someone removes the stake, unless its body is destroyed. A popular tactic involves cutting off the creature's head and filling its mouth with holy wafers (or their equivalent).

Thought Stalker

Large Giant
Hit Dice: 6d8+36 (63 hp)
Initiative: +2 (Dexterity)
Speed: 30 feet
AC: 18 (–1 size, +2 Dexterity, +7 natural)
Attacks: 2 claws +8 melee, bite +3 melee
Damage: Claw 1d6+5, bite 1d6+2
Face/Reach: 5 feet by 5 feet/10 feet
Special Attacks: Rend 2d6+9, Paralysis
Special Qualities: *Ethereal jaunt*, *detect thoughts*, regeneration 3, scent, darkvision 90 feet
Saves: Fort +11, Ref +4, Will +4
Abilities: Str 21, Dex 14, Con 22, Int 17, Wis 11, Cha 12
Skills: Hide +7, Listen +6, Spot +6
Feats: Alertness, Iron Will

Climate/Terrain: Any land, aquatic, and underground
Organization: Solitary or gang (2–4)
Challenge Rating: 7
Treasure: Standard
Alignment: Always chaotic evil
Advancement: 7–18 HD (Large)

An evil wizard named Talisnam used an arcane process to create the thought stalker (most likely there is only one). Using a troll as the creature's basic core, the wizard infused it with power, altering both its body and its brain. The result was a much more intelligent creature with the ability to "step out of phase" and disrupt the brains of creatures it touched. Unlike other trolls, the thought stalker hungered for mental energies and living brains to feed upon. Ultimately it turned on Talisnam, killing him.

The thought stalker looks like a troll with dark blue-black flesh, long black hair, glowing yellow eyes, and an obviously intelligent and sinister demeanor.

The thought stalker speaks Giant.

Combat

Like a troll, the thought stalker launches itself into combat without hesitation. However, if it suffers any damage at all, it retreats to the Ethereal Plane to regenerate, then follows its prey for a time, waiting until an opportune moment presents itself to shift back and attack.

Rend (Ex): If the thought stalker hits with both claw attacks, it latches onto the opponent's body and tears the flesh. This attack automatically deals an additional 2d6+9 points of damage.

Paralysis (Su): The touch of the thought stalker paralyzes a creature by sending powerful jolts to its brain and disrupting its neural connections. Victims can resist the effect by making a Will saving throw (DC 14).

Ethereal Jaunt (Su): The thought stalker can shift from the Ethereal to the Material Plane as a free action, shifting back again as a move-equivalent action (or during a move-equivalent action). The ability is otherwise identical with *ethereal jaunt* cast by a 15th-level sorcerer.

Detect Thoughts (Sp): The thought stalker can use this spell-like ability at will as a 15th-level sorcerer.

Regeneration (Ex): Fire and acid deal normal damage to the thought stalker.

If the thought stalker loses a limb or body part, the lost portion regrows in 3d6 minutes. The creature can reattach the severed member instantly by holding it to the stump.

Winter Harridan

Huge Elemental (Cold)
Hit Dice: 20d8+48 (138 hp)
Initiative: +15 (+11 Dexterity, +4 Improved Initiative)
Speed: Fly 50 feet (perfect)
AC: 21 (–2 size, +5 Dexterity, +8 natural)
Attacks: Slam +21/+16/+11 melee
Damage: Slam 2d8+9
Face/Reach: 10 feet by 5 feet/15 feet
Special Attacks: Freezing gaze, ice blast
Special Qualities: Elemental, cold subtype, damage reduction 15/+2
Saves: Fort +8, Ref +17, Will +6
Abilities: Str 22, Dex 20, Con 15, Int 13, Wis 11, Cha 11
Skills: Listen +18, Spot +18
Feats: Dodge, Improved Initiative, Mobility, Power Attack

Climate/Terrain: Any land and underground
Organization: Solitary
Challenge Rating: 11
Treasure: None
Alignment: Neutral evil
Advancement: None

The winter harridan is an elemental creature made of swirling ice and snow—a living blizzard. Dark eyes and a mouth can be seen within the storm, and from them spray streams of ice, as if the creature freezes the very air it sees and breathes. Meeting its icy gaze can turn a living victim into ice. Truly, this creature is the epitome of frozen terror and death-dealing cold.

The winter harridan speaks Common.

Combat

The winter harridan buffets its foes in combat, firing blasts of ice and turning living creatures to ice. It prefers to use its ice blast power over everything else.

Elemental: Immune to poison, sleep, paralysis, and stunning; not subject to critical hits

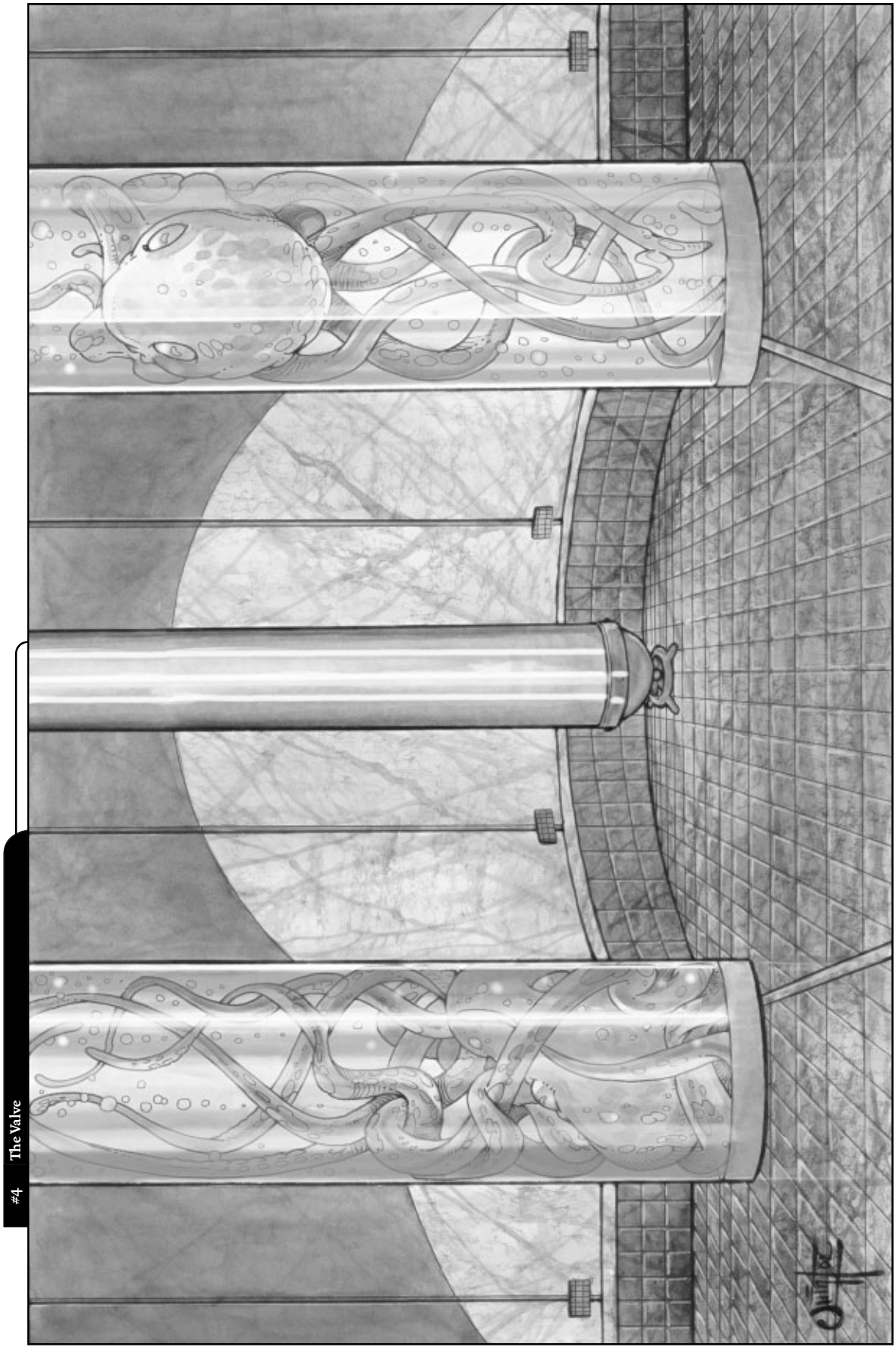
Cold Subtype (Ex): Cold immunity, double damage from fire except on a successful save

Freezing Gaze (Su): This gaze attack turns victims to ice. It has a range of 50 feet, and a successful Fortitude saving throw (DC 22) resists the effect. Treat being turned to ice as petrification, although *stone to flesh* will not help (*break enchantment* will). The victim may melt, even completely, but *break enchantment* can restore the character.

Ice Blast (Sp): The harridan fires blasts of ice from its eyes and mouth. This blast, a line 80 feet long and 5 feet wide, inflicts 4d6 points of impact damage and 4d6 points of cold damage (Reflex save [DC 20] halves). Usable every other round.

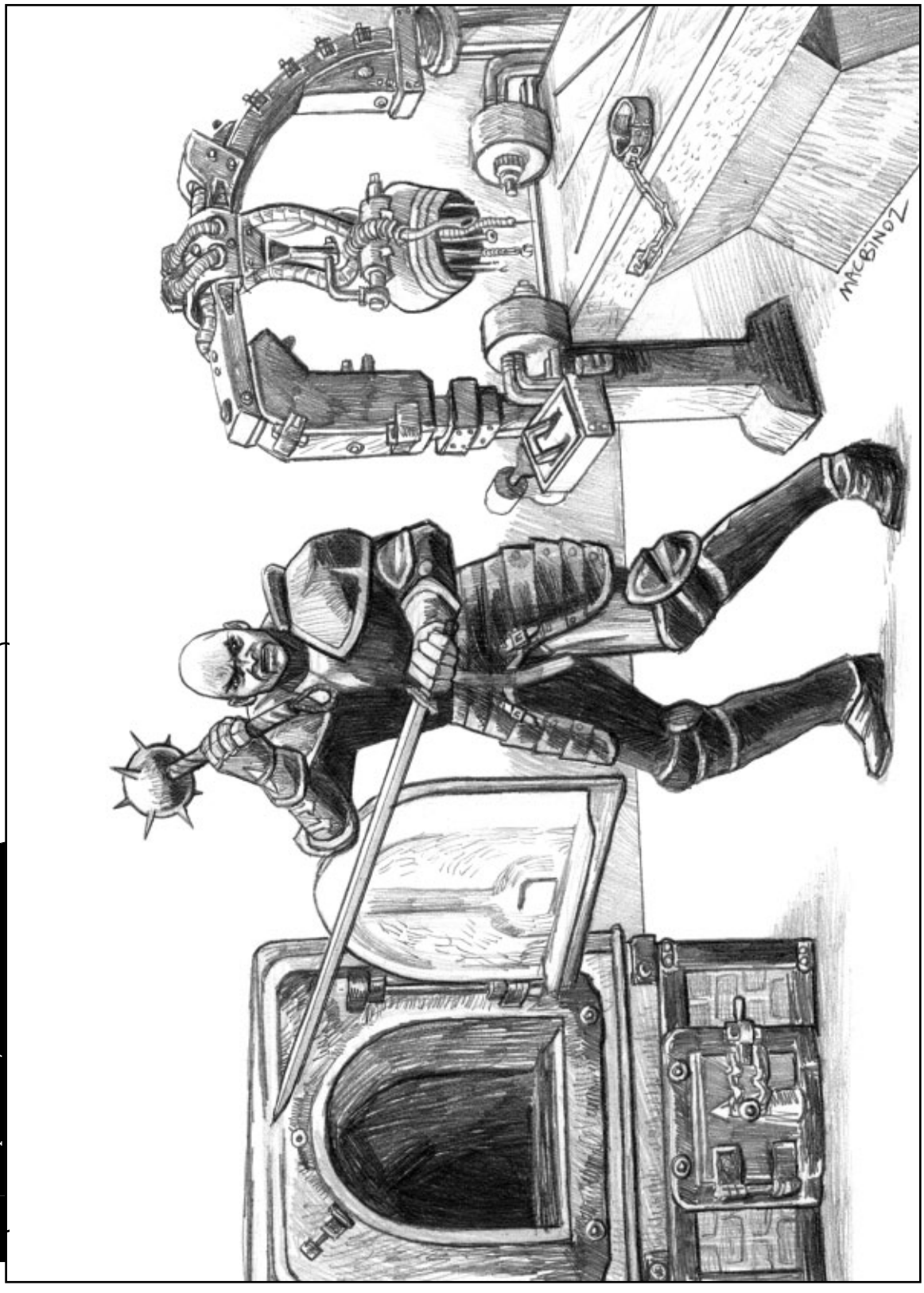
#2 The Sealed Door

#3 A Girl and Her Werewolves

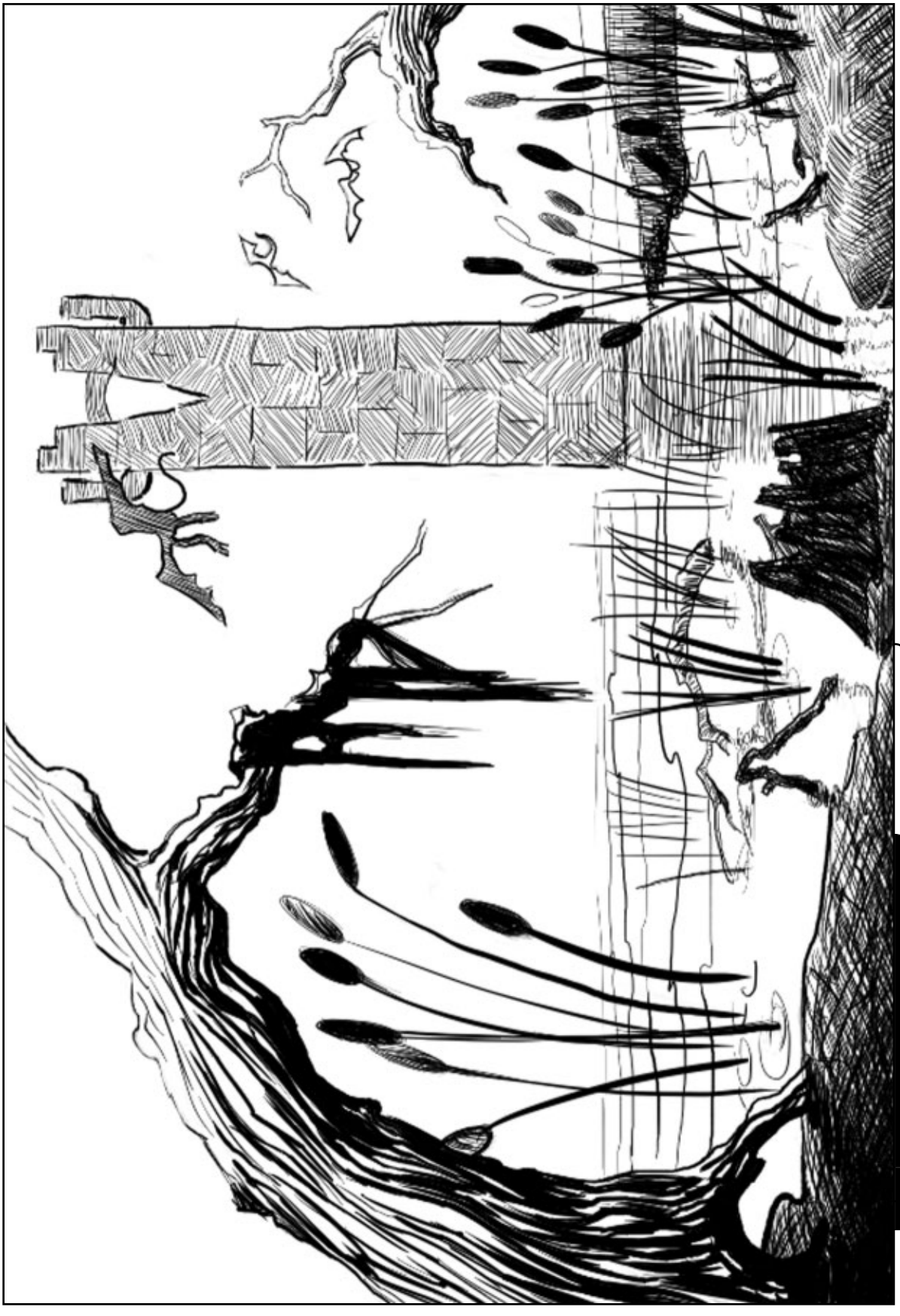


#4 The Valve

#5 The Osyluth Pods



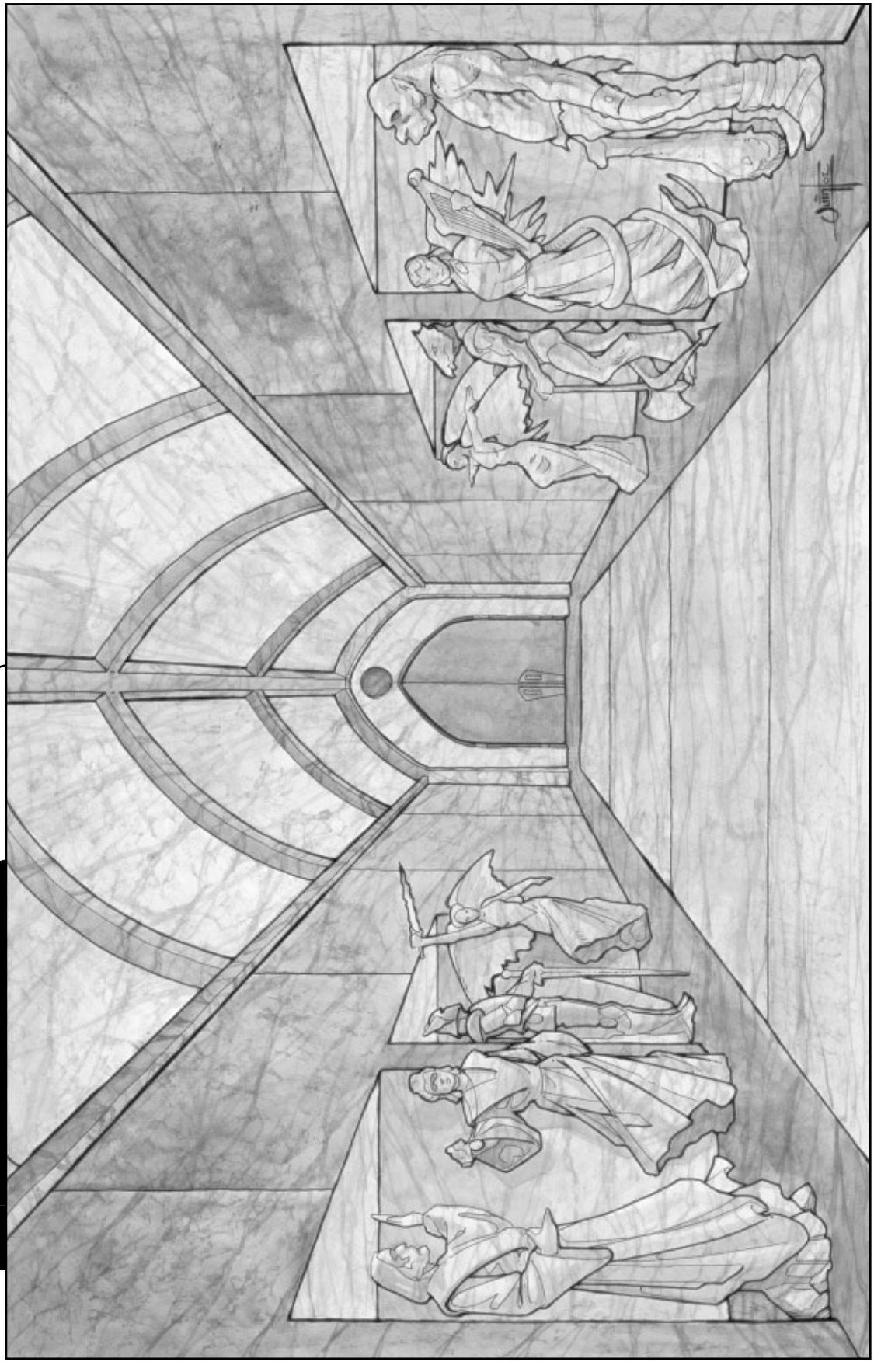
#6 The Top of the Belfry



#7 The Quaan

#8 The Conflagration

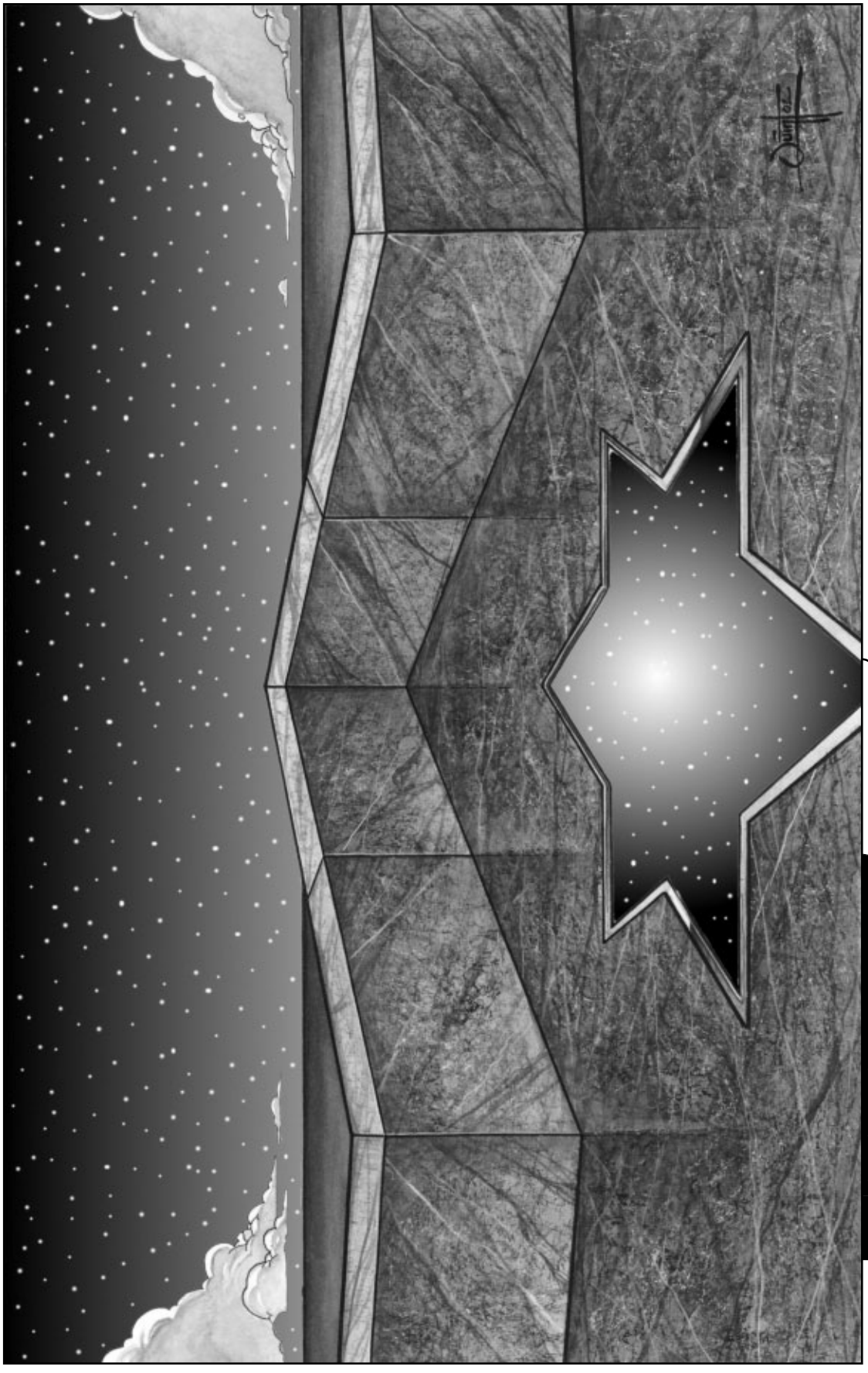
#9 The Betrayed



#10 The Hall of Statues

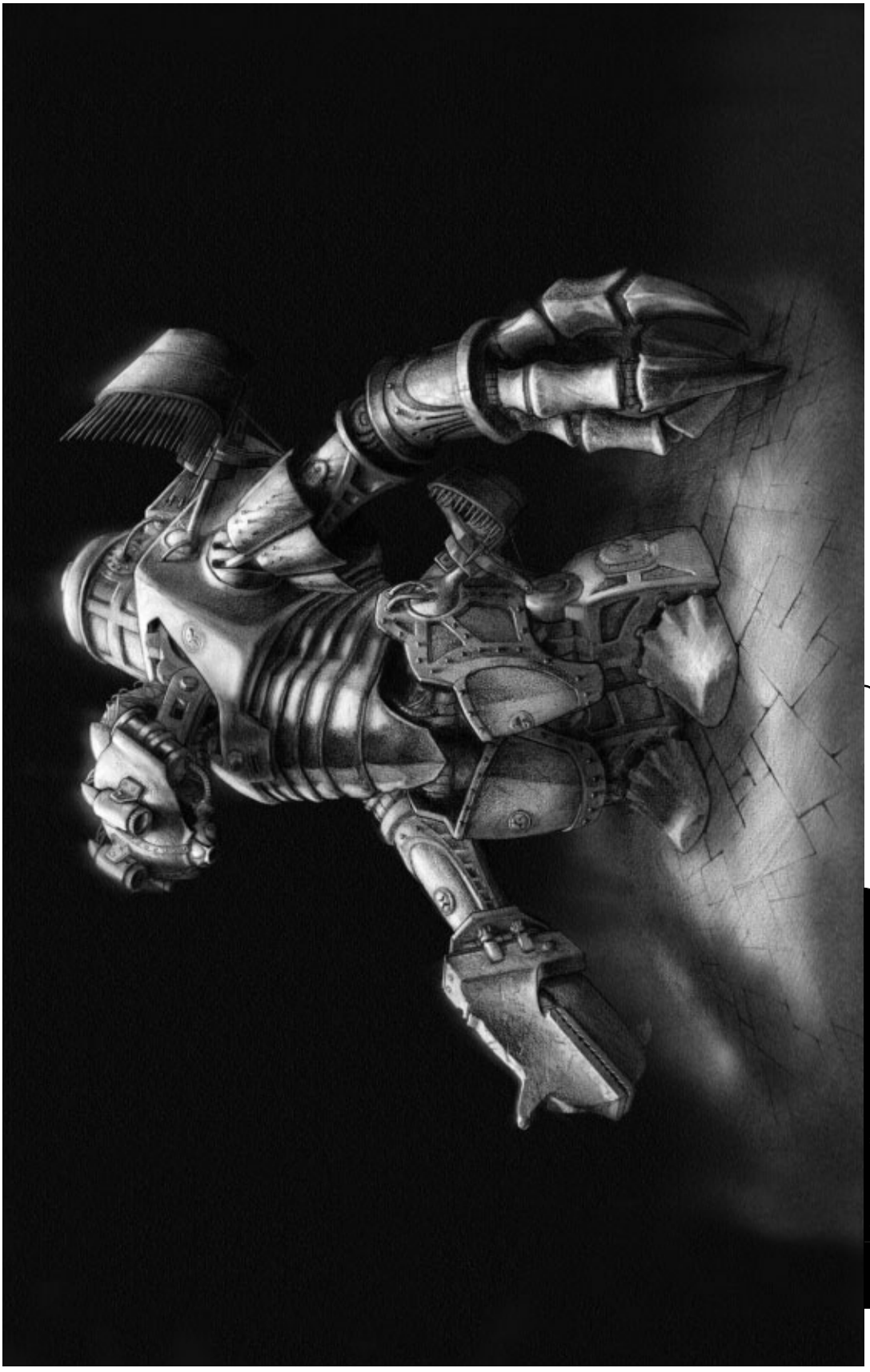
#11 The Winter Harridan

#12 | The Cavern of Stairs

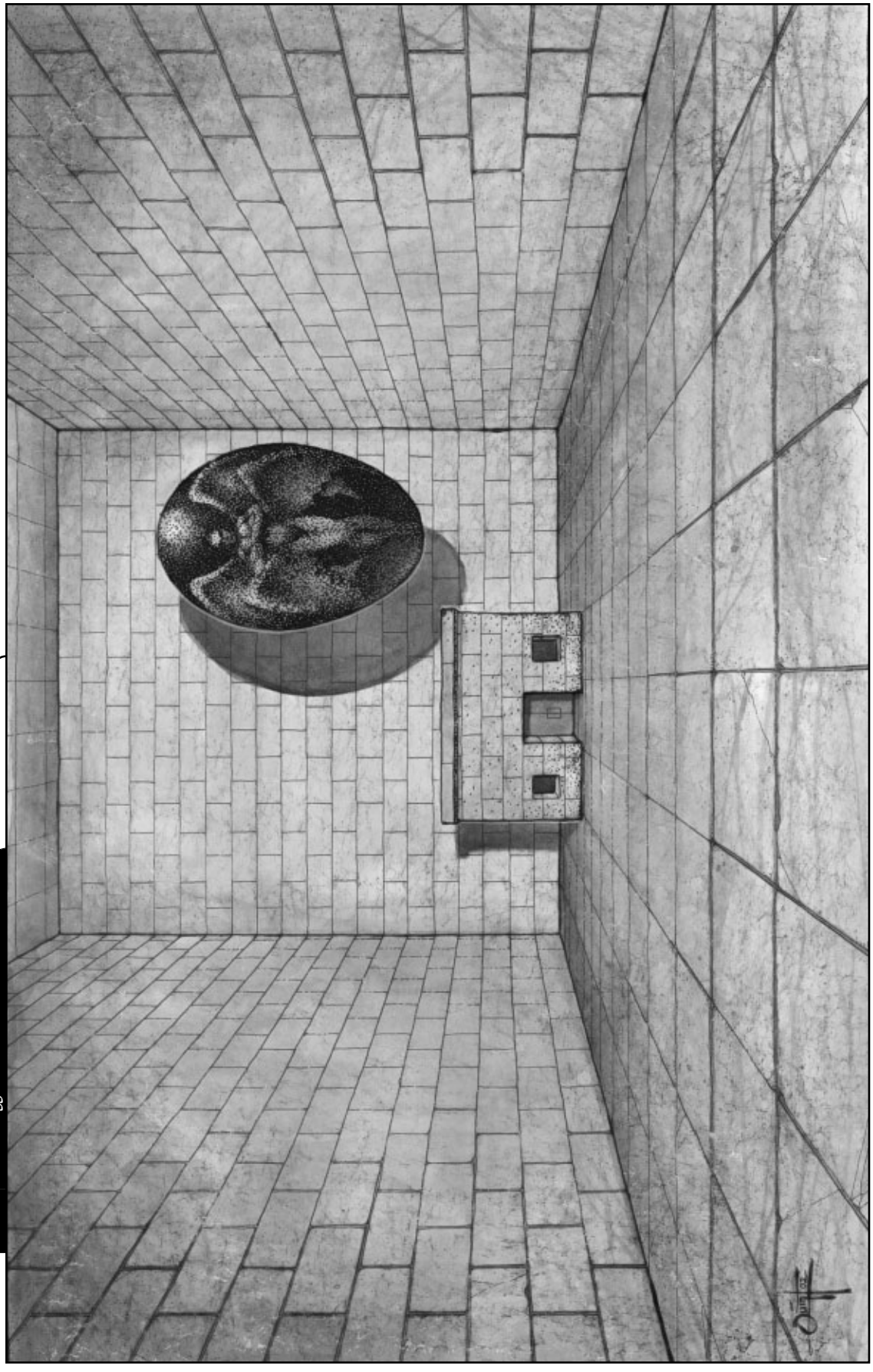


#13 The Darkstar Pendant

#14 The Master of Chains



#15 The Doomwalker



#16 The Dark Egg

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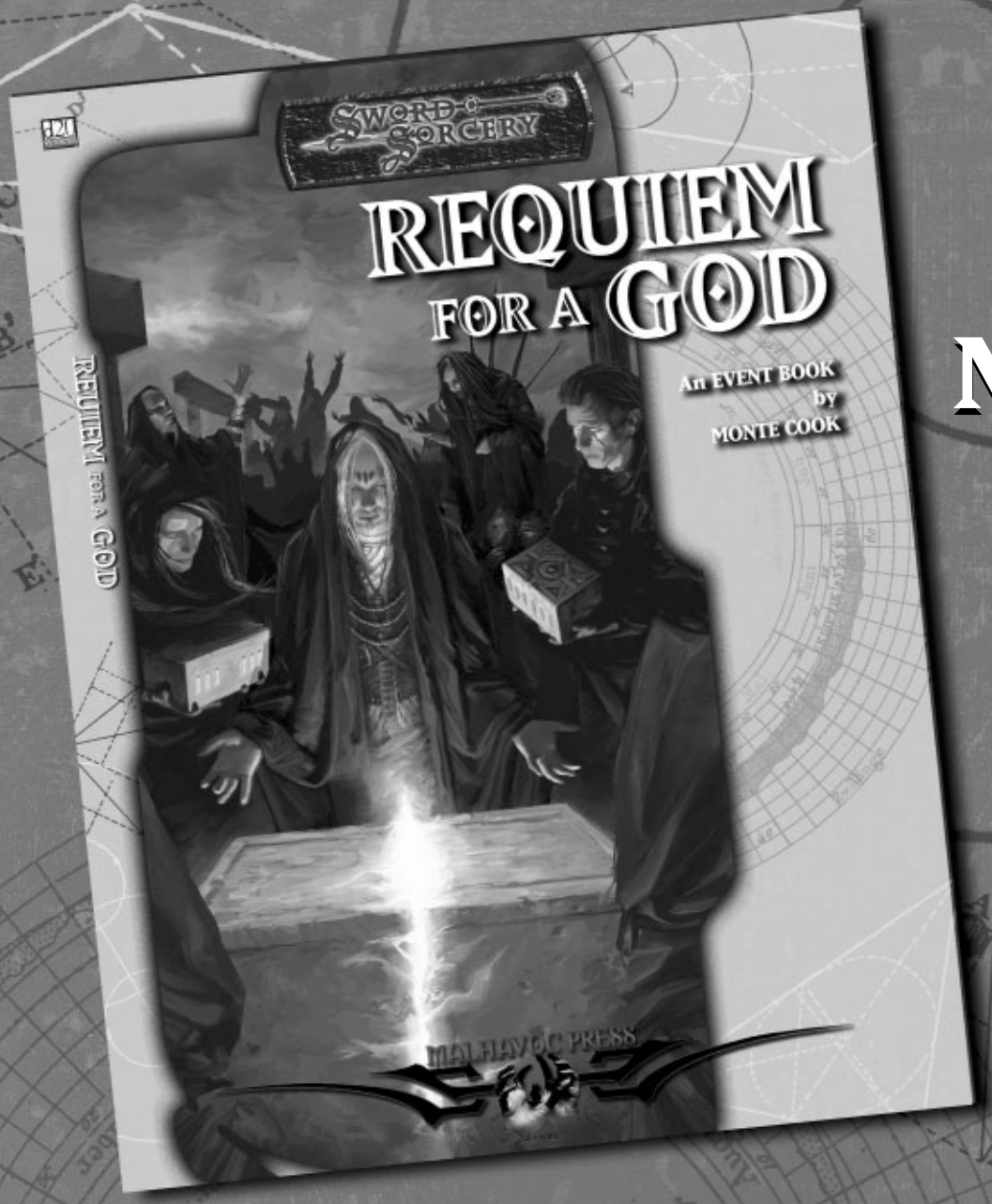

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